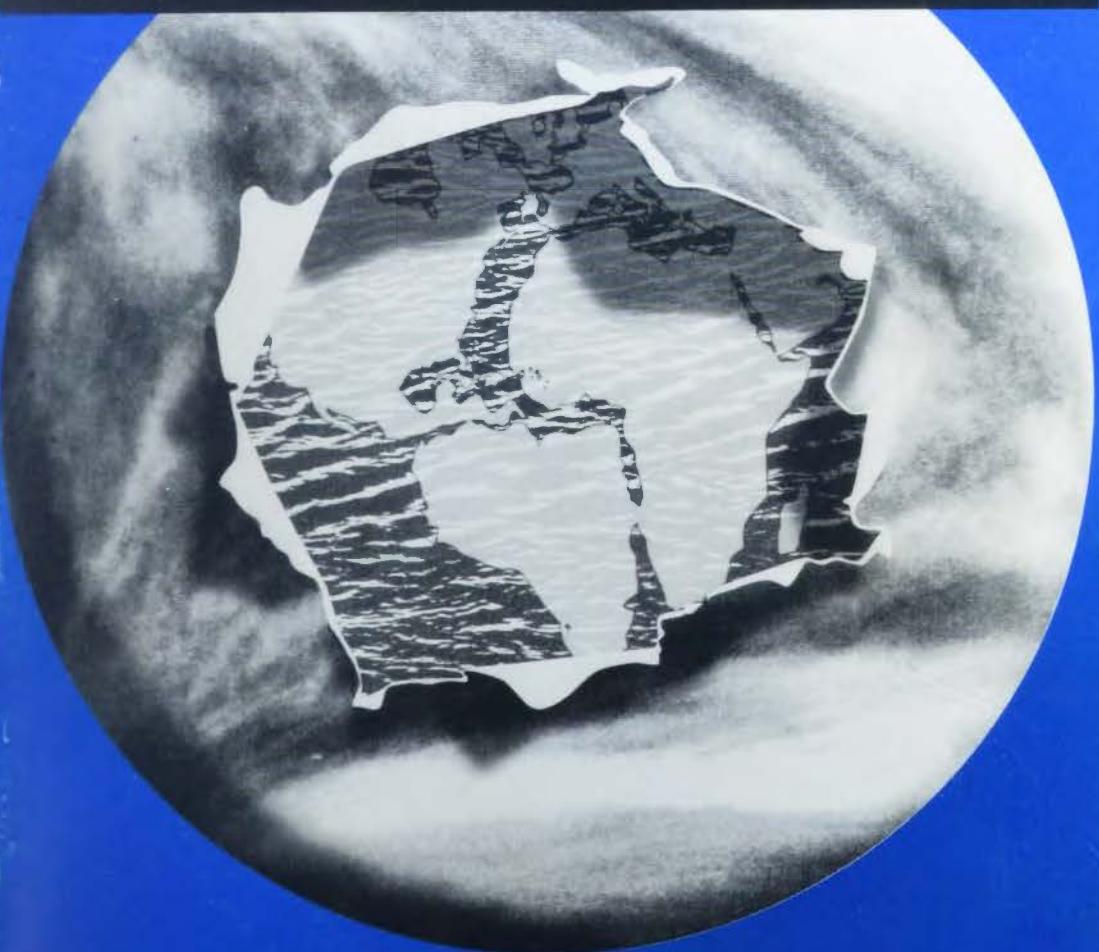


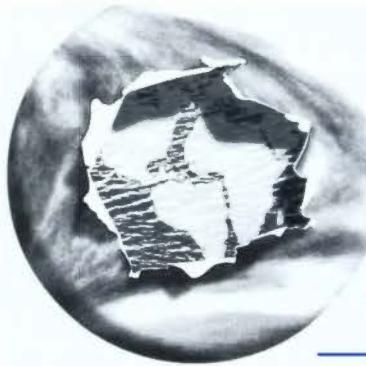
*Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? I made clouds its garment
and thick darkness its swaddling band...In the beginning God created the
heavens and the earth. And the earth was deserted and empty and
darkness was on the surface of the ocean...then
God said, "Let there be light."*

THE AGE OF THE UNIVERSE: WHAT ARE THE BIBLICAL LIMITS?



GORMAN GRAY
FOREWORD BY DR. DAVID ECKMAN

Associate Professor of Hebrew, Western Seminary



Does a literal interpretation of the Bible require a young universe? This author says, "No," as he invalidates some widely accepted assumptions about the age of the universe. At the same time he defends the recent creation of life as described in the literal Bible. Unique interpretive devices force the issue to a showdown in this controversial but insightful book.

As a pastor who is committed to verse by verse exposition and careful exegesis, I found your book to be very sound, irrefutable and interesting (I found it hard to put down!). I am totally convinced of your thesis, and will teach it from this day forward. Thank you for resolving a nagging theological, exegetical, and scientific issue for me. I will do my best to get the word out about your excellent book. It is one of the best books I have ever read.

Tom Carnes

pastor

"Your manuscript should become one of the most important contributions to creationist literature... I consider this book essential reading and deserving critical analysis by individuals in all subcategories of creationism and anti-creationism."

From personal communication by R.H. Brown and the Creation Research Society

Quarterly book review by him

Brown is a nuclear physicist and an expert in radioisotope dating.

"Mr. Gray is a creative thinker and an aggressive interlocutor... Within this text, you will find fascinating observations and arguments... A very good example of a careful study of the English text, and a very interesting argument with regards to the origin of the earth."

From the foreword by Dr. David Eckman

associate professor of Hebrew at Western Seminary, Los Gatos, CA

"...If, as I hope, this book becomes influential, it will revitalize the creation movement that has been so effective against evolution theory yet so vulnerable on such issues as the age of the universe."

Lieutenant Colonel Michael Fischer

U.S. Air Force Reserve

"Gorman Gray has been the first author to resolve my own conflict in creation versus evolution.

As a double major in chemistry and biology in college, I have been intrigued how evidence for the older age of the universe was strong while the evidence in biological life forms supported a younger earth argument.

Mr. Gray presents a solution that allows me to accept the truly scientific evidence from inert matter while rejecting the theistic evolution arguments from life forms that compromise the Bible's integrity.

This is a must read for every person interested in this debate."

Dr. Ken Wilson

lecturer and researcher in the field of Orthopaedic Surgery. He taught at Oregon Health Sciences University for seven years, and is president of Hand Surgery of Oregon.



Mr. Gorman Gray is a retired tooling engineer from the aircraft industry who has used his retirement opportunity to fill what he feels is a major weakness in creationist thinking. He is a graduate of Multnomah Bible College of Portland Oregon.

**THE AGE OF THE
UNIVERSE:**

*What Are the Biblical
Limits?*

ORIENTATION

Bible believers divide (roughly) into three categories with regard to the age of the universe.**

- 1) *Theistic evolutionists* (TE) accept most of the prevailing views regarding a universe billions of years old and fossils millions of years old; but they believe God guided the forces of evolution to produce living things. (Davis Young, M.A. Corey, et al.)
- 2) *Progressive creationists* (PC) support most of the generally accepted views regarding a universe billions of years old and fossils millions of years old; but they believe that God, at various stages in history, created special creatures and let them further develop to produce the modern range of biota. (Hugh Ross, P.T. Pun, et al.)
- 3) *Young-earth biblical literalists* reject the more common views of an ancient fossil record (preferring recent Flood geology), and interpret the Bible to require a young earth (YEC) and a young universe no more than 10,000 years old. (Henry Morris, Ken Ham, et al.)

This book contends that Scripture requires a fourth category:

- 4) *Undefined age biblical literalists* interpret the Bible to require a young biosphere (YBC) a recent, literal, six-day creation) but leave planet earth's mineral base and the stellar heavens with an unspecified time of origin. This allows for a *possible or probable* old universe and earth but *requires* a recent biology. Such is the theme of this book. It is hoped that a better interpretation will bring widely divergent extremes to an intellectual dialogue and ultimate unity without compromising a word of Scripture or empirical science.

**Intelligent Design people could make another category. They perform an important service but they tend to accept mainstream geology and do not generally commit themselves regarding Bible truth in public debate. (Phillip Johnson, William Dembske etc.)

THE AGE OF THE UNIVERSE:

What Are the Biblical Limits?

by Gorman Gray

"I am convinced that, at its best, science is simple—that the simplest arrangement of facts that sets forth the truth best deserves the term science. So the geology I plead for is that which states facts in plain words—in language understood by the many rather than the few."

This quotation from George Otis Smith, former director of the U.S. Geological Survey perfectly reflects the literary philosophy which has guided the development of this book. History of cosmological thought is not belabored; little reference is made to highly regarded scholastic disputes. The reader is directed to the plainly compelling words of the Hebrew Scriptures.

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Cover depicts earth shrouded in a dense cloud
with a peek hole and a *supposed*
(certainly not proven) Pangea
submerged in the ocean.

The earth of Genesis 1:2 was not a chaos but a completed planet, ocean covered and surrounded by a "cloud of thick darkness" (Job38:9)

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For confirmation of conclusions involving the Hebrew language, I am especially indebted to Atara Moalem, a native Israeli and a biblical archeologist. Dr. David Eckman was another source for Hebrew criticism which resulted in the unsolicited but very welcome foreword to this book. Seven Hebrew authorities have critiqued the texts used for accuracy.

There are many others who could be mentioned but especially to the unseen and unsung who have held me up in prayer, and to some who may read this book and be inspired to pray, your day must wait as with many other heroes for the day of judgment, when the entire universe will be upheld in precision justice down to the counted hair. Then, many who are first will be last and the last first, many forgotten will be remembered and every wrong righted. And only then will the strategic value of intercessory prayer be recognized. Thanks be to God first, and to all who have contributed.

Gorman Gray

“So they read in the book of the law distinctly, *and gave the sense*, and caused the people to understand the reading” (Nehemiah 8:8)

Our earnest endeavor and prayer to God is that this book will “give the sense”—no more and no less.

How can the age of the universe be that important? As long as we know God made it what's the big deal?

Answer: It is only a big deal when you or your children or any living human beings enter a university or other social force promoting evolution theory. They are certain the universe is billions of years old (and we will see there is no biblical reason to doubt that conclusion) so when expositors insist that the Bible does not allow more than 10,000 years for the universe it invalidates the Bible and gives a false credibility to evolution. Then, their dangerous ideas about millions of years of geology and paleontology are easily sold in the package. How many heartbroken parents have watched the demise of their children’s faith when assaulted by well-informed and articulate university professors. Yes, God can and does prevail with seeking hearts but yes, it is a very big deal.

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	9
Preface	13
Chapter One: Thesis and Introduction	17
Chapter Two: Hazards in Bible Interpretation	33
Chapter Three: Four Foundational Imperatives	43
Chapter Four: Biblical Cosmogony - A Paraphrase And Commentary	55
Chapter Five: Creation Passages Illustrated With Known Astronomical Features	75
Chapter Six: Needless Obstacles to Creation Science	83
Chapter Seven: Relativism Questioned For Its Biblical Basis And the Setterfield Comeback	93
Chapter Eight: Objections To Undefined Age Answered	113
Chapter Nine: Theistic Evolution Promoted By Mandatory Young-Universe Doctrine	127
Chapter Ten: Closing Thoughts And Summary	133
Bibliography and References	144
Appendix A: Historical Background of the Origins Debate	149
Appendix B: Absolute Biblical Truth: On What Basis?	153
Appendix C: Geology From a Biblical View	157
Appendix D: Hebrew Dictionary Aids For Critical Words	165
Appendix E: Language Challenge For Hebrew Students	167
Appendix F: Creation Story For Kindergarten	173
Appendix G: Dr. Northrup's Interpretation	179
Self-study Quiz	183
Indexes	187
Call For Feedback — Your appraisal needed	192
Comments and Endorsements	193

FOREWORD

This is an encouraging little book for a Bible teacher and trained Hebrew teacher to review! It consistently shows how a careful English reader with access to biblical language tools can come to thoughtful and insightful conclusions. That is one reason among several why it is a pleasure to introduce and recommend this text.

The purpose of this text is to give an alternative to those who hold an early date for creation, such as 6,000 years ago. I am just tangentially familiar with the arguments going on among those who advocate a young creation and the advocates of the opposite. My interest in this is of a different nature.

Over the years I have been trained in biblical and ancient languages in almost every imaginable type of school, from fiercely conservative to flaming liberal, from Berkeley to Oxford, England. My first lessons in Hebrew were from Bernard Northrup, an arch-conservative and a creationist, and my last lessons were from James Barr, an arch-opponent to fundamentalism. I have received training in lower criticism and higher criticism, from genre criticism to canonical criticism. And through that training and my own studies of the Hebrew text, I came to certain conclusions about the text in Genesis 1. Those conclusions were based not upon any great interest in science or creationism. They were based upon what I believed careful literary technique and a close reading (this is used in a purely technical sense) of the Genesis 1 account would bring. My conclusions were as follows:

- the viewpoint of the observer in Genesis 1 was from the surface of the planet,
- the text presupposed an earlier creation of indefinite length in Genesis 1:1-2 followed by six days of preparing a stage for the human drama,
- “the earth” of Genesis 1:9 ff was the land mass that came forth from the waters,
- “the Heavens” of Genesis 1 was the sky the birds flew about in,
- the contemporaneity of the Deuteronomistic history (the history from Genesis to 2 Kings) and Job and particularly Ezekiel with his account of the anointed cherub implies a watching good and evil angelic host,

- *Asah* and *bara* are two distinct Hebrew terms, both implying the redoing of previously existing material; the former deals with the remaking of something and the second (while only being used of Yahweh) usually involves creating something incredibly different,
- and finally, Exodus 20:11 refers to the remaking of the planet and not the creation of the same.

My conclusions were based upon years of academic study in the biblical languages, and lo and behold Mr. Gorman Gray has noted the same things through the careful study of English texts of the Bible and the use of Hebrew-English tools. That delighted me, because I have had the belief over the years that a careful and diligent study of the English text with the available tools could at times bring the same results an academic study of Hebrew might bring forth.

Not only did I enjoy the care that is exercised in this book by Mr. Gray, I also found it interesting that some of his observations are supported by those who have no interest in his concerns. Significant scholars who have no interest in the internecine battles of fundamentalists have noted some of the same things. From a different and an oblique angle, several prominent scholars have posited some of the same conclusions. What is helpful about their observations is their lack of interest in the creation debate. Their interest is in the literary, and linguistic. Two very prominent ones are examples. Francis I. Andersen is an American who has pioneered research in linguistics and rhetoric. He has specialized in computer research of the Hebrew text as well as the isolation of the rhetorical features of biblical Hebrew. He maintains that Genesis 1:1-2 is background to the six formative days. Technically he believes that Genesis 1:2 is a “circumstantial clause” that describes the background to the divine fiats (The Sentence in Biblical Hebrew, 1974, pp. 86-87, and especially p.85). He isolated features of Hebrew grammar and syntax that support his belief. This internationally known scholar uses some of the most recent studies in the Hebrew language to buttress his conclusions.

B.S. Childs of Yale is considered by many to be the foremost Old Testament scholar in the United States and one of the leading ones of the world. By religious profession he is Neo-Orthodox. In his studies of Genesis 1, he maintained that the six days were preceded by a chaotic condition that is conquered by the word of Yahweh. His approach is based on the Hebrew text and the Ancient Near Eastern context (Myth and Reality in the Old Testa-

ment, 1960, p.32ff). Childs maintains that Genesis 1:2 is again a circumstantial clause that gives the background to the divine activity to follow. Both Andersen and Childs are opening the possibility of an indeterminate amount of time involved in verse two.

In effect what one has with this book by Mr. Gray is a meeting of two separate streams of thought coming into an unwitting confluence. These streams are the scientific discoveries of the recent past and some literary and linguistic studies of the same period. They both imply a creation previous to the six days of Genesis.

Mr. Gray is a creative thinker and an aggressive interlocutor. Within this text one will find fascinating observations and arguments. I frankly was flabbergasted to discover that some are actually positing that light rays have been pre-encoded to have images of distant galaxies and times upon them. The purpose was to give the appearance of age. That is special pleading with a vengeance. I could not help but agree with Mr. Gray that such arguments make evangelical Christians appear silly.

My favorite scientific observation by Gorman Gray was his mention that Venus, our neighboring planet, and Titan, a moon of Saturn, had never had a day of light.** He compared that to the darkened earth that waited until Yahweh's call for light. His comparison of conditions on those spheres with the early earth fascinated me. That forced me to think about Genesis from far more than just a literary perspective.

So with pleasure I recommend this book to the reader. It is a very good example of a careful study of the English text, and a very interesting argument with regards to the origin of the Earth.

**David Eckman, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Hebrew
Western Seminary
San Jose, CA**

**** Author's note.**

These bodies do allow considerable translucence to their surfaces, and therefore imperfectly illustrate earth's primeval condition. The "cloud of thick darkness" which enveloped the earth was totally opaque like the three days of darkness in Egypt.

Author's Preface

Science and the Bible—can they be harmonized? Consider various attempts by well meaning people to accomplish reconciliation using widely differing efforts to solve the same problem.

Some reduce the first Bible chapter to figurative or poetic language, discounting the literal meaning. Day/age proponents interpret the six days of Genesis as long epochs, allowing for theistic evolution or progressive creation. Gap theorists imagine an immense interval of time after the creation in which millions of years of geologic processes took place thus acceding to the demands of the uniformitarian time scale. “Framework” devotees try to read Genesis in terms of literary genre, thus limited by human cultural writing styles and excusing any scientific anomalies..

Young-universe creationists deny the long-ages interpretation of geology and attempt to explain astronomical data with special devices. One attempt appeals to general relativity theory to allow time dilation, thus they hope to resolve the light-from-distant-galaxies problem. Others say the speed of light was formerly infinite, or near it, but now it has been reduced to present rates, thus hopefully bringing a solution. Others say the light was created recently with images of celestial activity encoded within the radiation so the stars only appear to be old but actually are not.

Still others abandon hope that the words of Genesis can be reconciled with science and excuse the Scripture’s error by saying its writers spoke from their limited knowledge of reality which involved many scientific errors. Some say the Jewish way of counting starts at the end of Day six only when Adam came to be. Others say that Days one to three were “ineffable years” due to relativistic time dilation. After that they were solar days.

Attempts abound—more than listed here. These are a few of the efforts to find peace between science and the Bible—all motivated by a desire for reconciliation by good and sincere people. All the examples above either leave the Scripture mangled or do a serious disservice to science. There has to be a better way.

With so many voices and without unanimity, it is clear that a major problem exists. It is also clear that a lot of wishful thinking prevails among the would-be harmonists. They cannot all be right with their conflicting theories. All the proposals, which ultimately are demonstrated false, perform a gravely counterproductive service in the search for truth. Skeptics soon tire of investigating yet another attempt without merit and the disunity displeases the Lord.

Yet if the Bible is reliable and if science is also trustworthy, there should be no conflict whatsoever. Science, if true, will be the friend of an inspired revelation, not its antagonist. *Perfect harmony*—consider carefully—*perfect harmony* must result from demonstrable science and an inerrant word of God. Bible conferences on origins should be able to exchange with the most prestigious scientific forums without the slightest embarrassment from either. The much maligned “concordism” ought to be revived.

The solution proposed here suggests that the conflict arises from imperfect interpretation of factual geology and paleontology on the one hand, and imperfect interpretation of the Bible on the other. Get them both right and, for the first time, a symphony of thrilling music will resound in the halls of intellectual investigation—comprised of researchers under rigid, scientific protocol and Bible lovers with a sound understanding. Today, sadly, a dissonance prevails instead, coming from a multitude of ideas from both sides of the orchestra. One is reminded of Mark Twain's comment on the various views of the Apocalypse: "Scholars have cast so much darkness on Revelation that no one can understand it." It applies to paleontological as well as biblical interpretation.

Dealing with creation necessarily involves miracles of the Creator—big ones. However big and grand and awesome creation is, the God who created it is bigger, grander and more awesome than His work. Each of the six days, and all the activity before the first day, were stupendous physical miracles, and the sixth day was a stupendous spiritual miracle as well. We are compelled to believe in a God who is above His creation and who can intervene supernaturally whenever, wherever and however He pleases.

Most of His interventions today are quiet. So quiet, in fact, that some might consider world activity merely as natural forces producing their predictable deterministic events. Only careful observers see His hand. We are dealing with a God who silently "hides himself" (Isaiah 45:15). "Your footprints were unseen" (Psalm 77:19).

But we are also dealing with a God who in other ways has revealed Himself with such profusion that no one has an excuse for denying His existence "being understood by the things that are made."** The next logical step should be seeking to know His heart. What kind of a God is this who has created such a fascinating world?

If seeking Him is the next step, why, then, do so few know Him? Why does Stephen Jay Gould, premier U.S. evolutionist from Harvard (now deceased) say about creation, "That is not an option for thinking people"? Why does Richard Dawkins, world renowned atheist from England, apologize for accidentally using the word "purpose" in his lecture on evolution and why does he assure his audience that the lucky ones were those who were never born? Dawkins says faith is worse than small pox.

Our reaction may be outrage and offense, but our spirit will speak with compassion, "Poor men, poor, blinded men! How we would like to help you! How we long to help you understand!"

The thesis of this book—an undefined age for the universe—eliminates one very big obstacle for those who cannot accept the biblical testimony. That obstacle is the mandatory young universe interpretation assumed by many Bible believers. To eliminate that obstacle is one major purpose of this book. We need not expect that if that error is removed that people will immediately rush to abandon evolution and embrace the Good News. The problem has never been the need for better evidence. The problem is rather blindness to abundant evidence. Nevertheless, we have a moral obligation to

**Romans 1:20

remove obstacles for the sake of evolutionists who may indeed respond, and for the sake of our own children who are being assaulted by the Goulds and the Dawkins of the academic world. This book addresses that need. And the solution is quite simple.

Most readers of this book will come with heavily reinforced preconceptions whether, theistic evolutionists, progressive creationists or young earth creationists. My plea is for open minds and hearts. If you think science has shown paleontology to be millions of years old (for how could all those scientists be wrong?) please hold that in abeyance while we pursue the truth. If you are concluded that God's word demands the entire creation to have been established "in the space of six days" please hold that in abeyance and open your heart and mind. Each of us has had the experience of being certain of a line of thought until we have been forced to say, blushing, "Oh—oh, I never thought of that."

So how can we know if we have the right interpretation? I think the primary test is when everything fits, with no apologies for anything—no apologies for a single fact of science, and no apologies for a single word of the text of Scripture—no need to depreciate confirmed data and no need to wish the Scripture were written differently—no need to obscure factual research and no need to force the Bible to fit our system of thought. Jig saw puzzles sometimes resist completion until an improperly placed piece, which appears a good fit but actually prohibits a final solution, is replaced with the correct one. Suddenly many partially assembled sections fall together in obvious order. So it is with biblical interpretation.

Ptolemaic celestial mechanics (where sun and stars revolve around a stationary, flat earth) appeared superficially to conform to plain observation and reason but anomalies persisted until abandoned for the Copernican solution. After that, Copernican circular orbits for planets and earth betrayed some small anomalies until corrected by Kepler's elliptical solution. Now everything fits, no apologies for any measurements, no need to devise compensating adjustments—everything fits comfortably. So it is with harmonizing science and the Bible. Solutions clear away the fog of many conflicting views.

The correct interpretation of Scripture will fit comfortably with a correct view of science but *both must be correct*. This writing calls for adjustments in both areas. The sacred cow of uniformitarian geology must be abandoned for biblical Flood geology (no small task) and the sacred cow of a mandatory young universe must be abandoned for an undefined age interpretation. Because undefined age will be shown here as the plain and straightforward testimony of the Bible, and Flood geology can be shown as the plain and straightforward testimony of the rocks, everything fits like a completed puzzle with no apologies necessary.

Consider these quotes directed by young earth creationists toward mainstream evolutionary scientists:¹

"Every scientist worthy of the name should always be willing to adjust his thinking as new data come in, continually striving for a more complete understanding of reality."² "Each (researcher) is

strongly sensitive to scientific observation, willing to modify specific views, as demanded by the data.”³ “They are...blazing new trails toward the goal of replacing a wrong idea with one that works better.”⁴ “Could it be that the noticeable weaknesses of standard thinking linger because mainstream scientists are stuck on the wrong track?”⁵

Without commenting on the scientific work of this excellent group, may I propose that these very men, with a multitude of their colleagues and, indeed, all of us need to modify our Bible interpretation on precisely the same features exhorted in these excerpts. We must be willing to adjust our thinking about Exodus 20:11, to modify specific views about the first day; to replace a wrong idea of the fourth day with something that works better; and to leave the wrong track of a mandatory young universe for a superior interpretation of Genesis. When that is attained, the truth derived will be easily understandable to children, yet fully resolve any scientific conundrum. An interpretation which can be understood by simple people, yet satisfies every major scientific difficulty, and every demand of hermeneutics is far, far more credible than any idea which depends on esoteric knowledge whether from linguists or scientists.

This writing deals almost exclusively with Bible interpretation. The reader’s acquaintance with the Genesis narrative is assumed. Technical Hebrew language detail has been avoided in the body of the text to make it more “reader friendly” to the general audience. Appendix E includes a test of the validity of the thesis of this book which highly trained Hebrew scholars are invited to apply to a work done by a student with no training in Hebrew. Areas where Hebrew grammar and syntax are critical are discussed there. Hebrew students as well as those with no knowledge of Hebrew should read this appendix.

Scholars have a right to examine credentials and appraise the source. Because this book is essentially Bible interpretation, a privilege enjoyed by every believer, the only credentials I need to offer are the results. Before this work is dismissed as being without the imprimatur of Hebrew expertise, please test the rather audacious predictions made in Appendix “E” and read a similar interpretation to this one by a Hebrew expert in Appendix “G”.

¹ From the book, *Radioisotopes and the Age of the Earth* (an interim report on progress by creationist scientists researching dating methods.) Copyright 2000 Institute for Creation Research, El Cajon, CA and Creation Research Society, St Joseph, MO. ²p iii, ³p vi, ⁴p vii, ⁵p viii

Cover artwork depicts earth shrouded in a dense cloud with a peek hole and a supposed (certainly not proven) Pangea submerged in the ocean. The earth of Genesis 1:2 was not a chaos but a completed planet, ocean covered and surrounded by a “cloud of thick darkness” (Job38:9)

THE AGE OF THE UNIVERSE: What are the Biblical Limits?

Skimmers beware ...

Skimming this book once might be okay for orientation, provided we do not leave it there. Skimming tends to awaken and reinforce our preconceptions because we are merely reminded of our own oft repeated and deeply rutted arguments.

CHAPTER 1

THESIS AND INTRODUCTION

AN OPENING PARABLE

Falling snow and a brisk wind warn of the coming blizzard. Five Alaskan hunters cancel their plans for an overnight expedition and head for the 4x4 rigs parked at trailhead. Their record of landmarks should guide them through the maze of forest and hills to their destination. But a snow-white landscape introduces a brand-new world.

The first test comes when a hunter calls, “Wrong way, men, we must go right.” Discussion follows and the lead hunter explains, “No, Jack, with Mt. McKinley lining up with the broken tree on the hillside, we must go left.”

Jack explains reasons for his concern but four out of five elect left. Jack follows for a hundred yards but his misgivings overpower him. “You know, with evening approaching, a wrong turn in this wilderness could, literally, be a matter of life or death.”

“Don’t worry, Jack, I would stake my life on our record.”

Jack is almost pleading now, “I want to cooperate, but I simply can’t go further. It just isn’t right. Please listen to my reasons.”

“No offense, Jack, but trust us, we can’t stop to explain again when our map is so plain. Please don’t go back or you will get lost.”

Jack sighs in resignation, “I am going it alone. I will send out the search party.” He finds his preferred trail and continues down the hillside. Everything seems to confirm his suspicions. Finally, he comes to another “Y” in the trail similar to the one disputed earlier.

Mt. McKinley is obscure but dimly visible, as is the distant broken tree. Jack knows this view matches the instructions disputed earlier. "Surely at this juncture I do, indeed, go left," he thinks.

Jack finds the rigs at trailhead and blows the horns hoping to reach his friends' ears. Darkness falls and he reluctantly returns to town 50 miles away. He alerts search and rescue, saying, "They can survive overnight with the equipment they have but with this relentless blizzard they can't last much longer."

The next morning Jack leads the search party to the separation point and the search is on. Six gruelling days later—celebration! The four hunters are huddled together in a snow cave, very cold, very hungry, and very much in despair. Jack takes turns hugging each one with tears of joy and gratitude. No blame, no hard words, just profound thanksgiving to God.

The message in this book is like "Jack," warning origin theorists that many of us have taken a wrong turn. The four lost hunters represent the various misguided assumptions regarding origins, whether young-universe creationism, theistic evolutionism, ** progressive creation or raw atheism. The former needs adjustment, the latter three need abandonment.

A decision looms. Young universe or old? Flood geology or millions of years? A wrong turn (that is, a biblical misinterpretation) could mean disaster on a gigantic scale if continued further.

THESIS

It will be shown in this book that the Scriptures leave the age of the stellar heavens and the planetary earth foundation undefined. However, the same Scriptures limit all *biological* life and the construction of the biosphere itself to less than 8,000 years.

The following positions are taken: 1) six literal, consecutive solar days of divine work took place *after* the original creation of the stellar heavens and planet earth; 2) the origin of man and everything biological is recent; 3) most geological features of the earth's crust resulted from the worldwide cataclysm—the Genesis Flood of about five or six thousand years ago (including biological derivatives such as coal, oil and almost all fossils); 4) the biblical text does not allow more than about 6,000 years of geologic time for dry land, or about 7,500 years if the Septuagint text data are valid. Evolution of any type is, therefore, categorically impossible.

However, it will also be shown that the sun, moon, basic earth and stars are undefined in age, just as they are undefined in dimension, and possibly for the same reason. God may have left

** "Evolution" throughout this book refers to Darwinian and neo-Darwinian macro-evolution whether theistic or atheistic.

both age and dimension undefined in order to show His limitless nature, transcending time and space. The universe may be “old;” biology, including fossils, cannot be.

This book proposes a challenge to the young-universe view promoted today by many creationists. Because the age-of-the-universe issue is the primary force leading to rejection of biblical literalism, the correction of this error will neutralize that destructive tool and may even encourage theistic evolutionists to reconsider their assumptions. Many expositors attempt to reduce Genesis 1 to figurative symbolism or metaphors, thus excusing what they perceive as discrepancies with science (a perception mostly produced by peer fear rather than factual data). A young universe does, indeed, involve conflict with facts, causing some to resort to symbolism or other devices.

Hopefully, a literal interpretation of Genesis will demonstrate its credentials so indisputably, including an undefined age for the universe, that progressive creationists will melt under that warmth without a direct assault being necessary. Accordingly, few remarks will appear against theistic or atheistic evolution until late in the book. Even though exposure of theistic evolution and progressive creation errors is another major concern of this book, we will attack that objective indirectly, by establishing a credible, biblical literalism first.

This writer holds to the plenary, verbal inspiration of Scripture and absolute authority of the autographs. “Every jot and tittle” is inspired (Matthew 5:18) including the chronologies which establish Adam’s creation and all organic life less than 8,000 years ago. Since any chronology derived from the text of Genesis 5 and 11 is sufficiently accurate for our purpose, textual problems will not be examined. A discussion of the fossil record also lies beyond the scope of this investigation. Creationist writers have shown the entire fossil record to be recent and *not* involving millions of years but rather are the result of the Great Genesis Flood, hence we refer to “Flood geology.” There will be no discussion of “day/age” ideas where expositors assign a lengthy epoch to each of the days described in the first chapter of the Bible. My theme assumes that literal days, bounded by evening and morning, are specified there.

While this understanding does involve a time interval between the creation of the stellar heavens and a much later “first day,” the interpretation offered here is not to be confused with the “gap theory” (ruin/reconstruction) which supposes a creation of organic life long before the six days. Such a pre-six day creation of life cannot be allowed. No sequence of events is indicated between verses 1 and 2 as required by gap theorists but time for a sterile earth *is allowed* between verse 2 and 3 as will be shown.

BACKGROUND HELPS

Readers unfamiliar with the historical background for this subject are directed to Appendix A which explains the history. Readers who cannot accept biblical authority ("So the Bible says it, so what?") are directed to Appendix B. If that direction is pursued wholeheartedly, it cannot fail to dissolve doubts regarding the veracity of Scripture. Appendix C supplies help for those with questions regarding recent biblical geology resulting from the great, global Genesis Flood, an exceedingly important concept to grasp.

One must not underestimate the need to understand geology from a biblical view. If geology has been confusing or boring, appendix "C" gives an illuminating introduction. It is hoped that non-creationists and anti-creationists will "listen in" to the arguments and give renewed consideration to literal biblical claims including recent Flood geology.

A MAJOR SCIENTIFIC PROBLEM FOR CREATIONISTS

Dr. Duane Gish has authored a book entitled Creation Scientists Answer Their Critics (9). Dr. John Morris has published The Young Earth (10). Neither publication addresses the question of the speed of light and the magnitude of the universe. When asked, separately, why they did not pursue that topic, these well-known authors answered almost identically. Both simply asserted that they did not want to get into that subject. Explanations attempted by other writers leave thinking people uneasy. A large segment of creationists interpret Genesis as limiting the age of the universe to a maximum of 10,000 years. And yet galaxies exist whose light requires millions, even billions of years to travel to earth. How can this be?

The question begs for an answer.

So far, no one has suggested a satisfactory response to this problem. Despite various attempts, doubts persist that this issue has been resolved. Dr. Barry Setterfield has proposed that light velocity has changed from near infinity at the original creation to the presently measured rate. His theory thrived for a while among creationists, then was less popular but may be regaining consideration. Dr. Russell Humphreys, creationist physicist, has offered the most recent attempt, and because it has largely replaced the previous unsatisfactory answers in popularity, chapter 7 will offer a more elaborate critique of his new idea. Dr. Humphreys, like Setterfield, tackles the problem head-on, but both may be leading us down a dangerous, snowbound trail. Although the physics of Humphreys' system may be worthy of consideration, the biblical basis for his cosmology is flawed, as we will see. (Because of changing usage, the word

cosmology will be used for theories of origins involving astrophysics. *Cosmogony* will be used for biblically derived origin theories.) Setterfield, to my knowledge, has not provided a biblical exposition but certainly his physics should be worthy of cautious consideration also, but we dare not jump to conclusions.

Creationists have a serious problem. Avoidance of the subject by some of the top leadership, a lack of consensus everywhere, and quick response to any glimmer of hope (such as the current interest in relativism or the changing speed of light) is a tacit admission that the answer has eluded us. Young-universe creationists are dogged by an unresolved problem. Any refuge appearing to give some hope seems to be welcome.

The thesis of the present work can be likened to Jack, the hunter, giving the warning, “You must be interpreting the landmark record incorrectly.” Creationists are trying to make the Bible say what it does not say in the same way that theistic evolutionists and progressive creationists are trying to make the rocks say what they do not say. A wicked devil, who inspired both errors, is equally pleased with either one, leaving those who hold mistaken ideas critically vulnerable to deception from their respective false assumptions. Whether promoting uniformitarian geology or a mandatory young universe, we are asking our listeners to believe something for which there is neither biblical nor scientific proof in either case.

In taking the undefined-age-of-the-universe position, *no concession is made to popular scientific opinions* regarding the age of the cosmos or world geology. Acceptance of Flood geology leaves one an outcast to evolutionists and rejection of a mandatory young universe leaves one an outcast among many creationists, hardly evidence of yielding to intellectual pressure. Allegations of accommodation to political pressures in this writing should be easy to refute. Some would like to think that intimidation from the establishment has influenced my thesis. I suggest that they walk in my shoes for a while if they are so illusioned. The assertions of some scientists, which are contradictory to the word of God, simply reveal incomplete knowledge of either science or God’s word, or both. The straightforward Bible interpretation offered here solves all major problems by keeping us out of dangerous territory, namely, a universe required to be young and a fossil record required to be old. It is a simple, biblical solution for both errors, unpopular to both camps.

Many shades of creationism have arisen. This work is kindly and lovingly directed to the most visible segment of the creationist movement today, all of whom I regard as good friends. The detraction made here against a cherished doctrine of most creationists in no way diminishes love for them and in no way reduces the profound gratitude felt for their immeasurable contribution to creation

science. I speak from the depths of my heart—my targets are treasured friends.

Other targets are non-creationists and anti-creationists who may be motivated to examine the case for a young geology and biology, literally derived from the Bible, once the stellar age obstacle is resolved. Theistic evolutionists, who believe that God guided Darwinian evolution to produce the biota, are invited to examine the evidence for a global Flood as a better explanation for the fossil record. Day/age people and gap theory proponents, who also want to square long ages of evolution with the Bible, should find this a much more satisfying message to bring to a skeptical world.

The subject matter here is controversial and emotionally charged. Some readers will approach it only with negatives and a singular purpose to refute—not good science. Rather it should provide an opportunity to demonstrate caring love and an open mind, thus proving that we have “passed out of death into life because we love the brethren.” “He who does not love, does not know God.” (I John 4 and 5). Discussion will be fruitless if controlled by a competitive, hostile, or closed spirit and mind.

TRANSLATION OBSTACLES

The Bible was written for the common people as well as the scribe. Conclusions available *only* to an educated elite are probably wrong. Just as nonacademic men started the church under Jesus' direction, so correct interpretations of Genesis are available to any rational person. Valid interpretations of the central themes will pass the test of simplicity and must be understandable to ordinary people including twelve-year-old youths. Because the conclusions drawn in my theme are so simple, appendix “F” provides a version of Genesis which is suitable even for kindergarten children, word-for-word from the Bible. Surprisingly, this is another major corroboration of the correctness of the interpretation presented here. The identical message is understandable and plain to children as well as college professors. Children need not learn an explanation one way in kindergarten and then abandon that for a complicated explanation of Genesis later. Please rank this of paramount significance.

The young universe theory rests upon a superficial reading of translations of Genesis 1:16, “And God made two great lights... the stars also” (on the fourth day) and of Exodus 20:11, “For in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, the sea...” It might appear from common translations of Genesis 1:16 that God created or assembled the stars on day four. Similarly, Exodus 20:11 could be read to mean that God created the entire cosmos in six days. It is understandable that some readers would draw these conclusions when the text is so rendered, and consider these verses “incontrovertible

evidence” for a young universe.

Actually, the original Hebrew in both Genesis and Exodus says nothing about the time of creation for the stellar heavens. For that matter, *rightly understood, neither do the common translations* as will be shown.

Another major contributor to the mandatory young universe theory is the assumption that the Genesis 1:1 creation of heavens and earth took place as part of the first day. We will examine (and hopefully demolish) that assumption. Still another contributor is the concept of a formless, fluidic chaos instead of a tangible, planetary earth in verse 2. Another error assumes darkness throughout the cosmos until the command, “Let there be light.”

Without forcing the original language, let us consider a better representation of the Hebrew text. We should read Exodus 20:11 and Genesis 1:16 differently. The interpreter must work from Hebrew on disputed passages, not English or Chinese. Suppose we represent the verse in Exodus with more legitimate, contextually considered language. God Himself has provided the definition of “heavens” on day two to mean the air, and “earth” is defined for us on day three as the continental land (see Genesis 1:8-10). These are definitions quite different from those required for verse 1 because neither air nor dry land existed with verse 1. Consider Exodus 20:11 in Dr. Northrup’s rendition (appendix “G”) combined with God’s definitions of heaven and earth (air and land):

For six days (Yahweh) worked on the air, the land, and the sea and all that is in them.

This is a more legitimate translation. It is in perfect conformity to the original text, without any stretching, twisting, or forcing, as we will show, for this is exactly what God did for six days. He *worked on the existing planet*, giving it a lifegiving atmosphere, dry land and seas and filling all those areas with teeming life—the biosphere. (The word “heavens” always occurs in the plural form in Hebrew, no matter whether singular or plural is meant.)

Suppose we would render Genesis 1:16 (day four) worded:
And God brought forth two great lights ... the stars also ... and gave them forth in the expanse of air ...

The reader must visualize the verb “bring forth” as a single thought blended from English words commonly translated from the Hebrew “*asah*,” namely *do, work, prepare, make, produce, bring forth, accomplish*. Those words, blended into one idea, are actually closer to the Hebrew meaning than the English *made*; and do not specify assembly of the sun and stars on day four. The six day work simply reveals the creation of a perfect home for man, without predation or pain, before the fall. All six, never-to-be-repeated days relate to the biosphere, not the basic planet, and they fairly shout,

“special creation.” The translations suggested above need to pass the tests of grammar, syntax, etymology and semantics and if they do, within their contextual setting, then these renderings are fully competitive with the older, standard renditions and should be carefully considered for replacement language. Rightly understood, the standard translations are okay, but they are *not best* if they can be misunderstood or misread. The purpose of translation is to supply the clearest possible language to suit the contextually mandated meaning. Since biblical Hebrew has only about 20,000 words (versus half a million in English) interpretation is extremely *context sensitive*. Each word must perform a range of duties so translation demands *understanding* even more than other languages.

Some may complain, “I don’t like it when you take our Bible, which has been with us for 400 years, and change it now.”

Whenever a translation is made, the original language is “changed” into a less-than-perfect representation of the autographs. The translations of the year 1611 or 1985 or of 2001 are no exceptions. The words suggested here represent an attempt to *return* to the original, contextually determined meaning, not a “change” in meaning at all. “Changes” made by translators exist throughout all Bible versions. In some cases these need correction, or at least explanation, to make the text better represent what the Holy Spirit gave to us.

The last people who would object to alternative translations of the Scriptures are those who made the common translations in the first place, such as KJV, ASV, RSV, NASB, NIV, CEV, NKJV, NCV, ESV and others**. Similarly, top experts in Hebrew translation are usually the first to suggest alternative renderings, especially for passages in which they specialize. The fact that so many differing translations exist, all made by reputable committees of sincere scholars, is proof that the best choices were not all established in 1611 with the King James Version. No doubt the KJV is worthy of deep respect because of the place of honor history has given it.

Quite often, a single translated word cannot represent the particular nuance of the original word in its specific context. It is good to use several carefully chosen constructions to fully grasp the meaning of any Bible passage. This principle will be followed throughout this book. Multiple translations and mixed translations will be cited. All translations used are found in one or more of the standard versions, dictionaries, or lexicons. Because there will be many examples of this, it would be cumbersome to document all of them but they *will be found* in the versions already mentioned or specially noted. In that way they are fully documented.

On the subject of this book all common translations *are ac-*

****** Respectively, King James, American Standard, Revised Standard, New American Standard, New International, Contemporary English, New King James, New Century and English Standard versions.

ceptable, although the best interpretation is more easily obtained by clarifying the text from the original Hebrew.

Any translation offered here that is not found in one of the nine versions mentioned above will be duly noted by three asterisks (***) . These are my preferred selections, but plenty of other selections from the standard translations are satisfactory. Any Bible quotation with no asterisks means that the words are found in one or more of the named versions. Very often the rendition will be a composite of several versions. One list of my preferred renditions is found on page 98A. In all cases, translations offered here are supported by the Hebrew reference material. It is suggested that the reader keep suitable reference tools easily accessible.

The translators of the King James Version said in their introduction, “Variety of translations is profitable for the finding out of the sense of the Scriptures” (12, preface). Thus we have the most prestigious recommendation for multiple translations from the very translators of the most important document in the history of the English language, the King James Version of the Bible. The KJV has also exerted profound influence on many translations other than English but that influence includes some errors as well.

If the alternative translations of Genesis 1:16 and Exodus 20:11 suggested above had prevailed over the past 400 years, the present embarrassment regarding starlight might have been avoided and radioisotope dating ratios would have been immensely simpler to explain. But if the reader objects to using these renditions, any standard translation, old or new, will do. We will arrive at the same destination—an undefined age for the universe and planet earth.

COMMON ASSUMPTIONS QUESTIONED

Enumerated below are some commonly accepted assumptions which have led sincere readers astray in Genesis 1. This will focus the polemics engaged later in the book. Each assumption mentioned will be followed by a brief assertive disclaimer which will be fully exposed in following chapters.

Assumption 1) *Genesis contains the only primary creation passage in the Bible.* Not so. Job 38:1-11, probably written before Genesis, contains important explanatory data from the lips of Yahweh God Himself as it relates to the earth’s foundation. Describing the earth at its *birth* God says, “I made the clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling clothes.” We will refer to this neglected passage frequently.

Assumption 2) *Genesis 1:1 is merely a summary of the coming chapter—not actual creation.* We will see that it is neither summary nor introduction but rather it announces the creation of actual celestial bodies.

Assumption 3) The darkness of verse two permeated the entire cosmos before the command for light came. Not if we carefully read the text. Darkness is specified on the surface of the ocean only. The rest of the heavens were burning brightly with orbiting celestial bodies, obscured from an earth bound observer by the “cloud of thick darkness” which surrounded the primeval earth according to Job 38:9, making a perpetual night on the earth before day one. Until the surface is illuminated there can be no days at all.

Assumption 4) Day one cannot be preceded by any cosmological time. Not true. The “cloud of thick darkness” (called “waters that were above” in Genesis 1:7) may have continued for a short time enveloping the earth or for millions of years before the command came for light to illuminate the ocean surface. Furthermore, the stars may have been created long before the earth was created. The time durations before day one are not defined. Therefore, eons of time may have transpired before day one occurred on earth even though no life had yet been created.

Assumption 5) Exodus 20:11, “For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth and the sea and all that is in them,” leaves no doubt that the entire cosmos was created within six days. Admittedly, when the text is rendered as stated, using definitions contrary to those supplied by God Himself during the six day record, that assumption might appear correct. But the original text coupled with God’s own definitions, which He gave us during and within that identified six-day period, (air, land and sea) limit the six-day context to the construction of the biosphere. Sun and stars were created in verse one before there were any “days” on earth.

Assumption 6) Genesis 1:16 plainly states that God made the celestial lights and the stars on day four. If by “made” one means “create” then the text does not say that at all. The surrounding text must be utilized to determine the proper translation of the Hebrew verb. God “brought forth” the celestial lights and the stars on day four. He created them in verse one. Some translate it, “God had made” (the sun and stars) using the perfect tense which is permitted grammatically. But with or without the perfect tense, the meaning is *NOT* creation of stars on the fourth day but visibility for signs and seasons. The viewing perspective is that of an observer from man’s home, the earth, the only sensible reference point.** Since the writer of Genesis 2 describes the primeval garden as “eastward in Eden,” it is clear that local surface orientation prevails. It is a “Moses” eye view or an “Adam’s” eye view.

The “sun stopped shining”* at the crucifixion (NIV, CEV). All agree it was blocked, not extinguished. Similarly, sun and stars were blocked from visibility until day four by a “cloud of thick darkness.” The sun existed but did not locally “shine” until day four.

Assumption 7) Mark 10:6 leaves no doubt that Adam

*Psalm 115:16 “The earth he has given to the sons of men.”

* Luke 23:45

and Eve were married “at the beginning of creation” and therefore the cosmos cannot be more than six days older than they. Proverbs 8 speaks, “Yahweh possessed me (Wisdom) in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, before the earth was.” So there was a beginning before Adam and even “before the earth was.” Our first parents participated in the beginning of creation regarding the human race and marriage. Stars have no relevance to marriage.

Assumption 8) *To accept an old universe jeopardizes the creation message.* Precisely the opposite is true. To accept an old geology and fossil record would indeed strike at the creation message but the age of the universe carries no such liability. Rather, for creationists to demand that scientists believe galaxies *must be* less than 10,000 years old is an inexcusable offense to the scientific community. Had the Scriptures taught a young universe we should be confident to accept that, but, as we will show, Scripture defines neither the age of the stars nor the age of planet earth mineral base.

A MISSING KEY

Job 38 is a critical creation passage yet almost totally ignored by origins theorists and, as one might expect from such an obvious and fundamental omission, major errors have resulted. The concept of a “cloud of thick darkness” enveloping the earth, is critical to understanding Genesis 1 but this concept is missing from the plethora of origins books available today whether creationist or intelligent design. As Columbus sought India and discovered two continents in between, so origin theorists need to discover Job 38:9 and a multitude of overlooked realities. The message is plain enough just from reading Genesis 1 with no reference to Job, but Job enhances and explains the “waters that were above” in Genesis.

Readers must forgive me if I hammer on the Job passage and if I hammer on other items which have been missed or ignored by popular expositors. Some readers will not need such repetition—others will—so please allow occasional returns to critical themes.

There can be no “day one” until that primeval cloud is at least partially dispersed to a heavy overcast to allow light to penetrate to the “surface of the ocean” and there can be no sun, moon and stars visible until full transparency is achieved on day four. The “darkness” before day one must have been total, like that of the three day judgment over Egypt (Exodus 10:21). The duration of this state is not defined. Biblically, darkness on the ocean could have lasted for two weeks or a billion years. God may have used the cloud of thick darkness as an insulator to preserve the planet’s heat and chemistry while He “waited” for light to arrive from distant galaxies. That is sheer speculation, of course. The only certain thing is that a cloud of thick darkness enveloped the ocean-covered

earth, and no one knows the duration of that darkness. Also, it should be noted that the record does not prohibit a much later creation of earth than that of the stars. We are not informed on that question.

SPECIAL INTERPRETIVE DEVICES

Special devices are employed in this book which constrain the interpretation and illuminate the meaning. All of them are simple and difficult to refute—equally useful to peasant or Ph.D. Some of them are particularly effective in exposing fallacious assumptions relating to Genesis 1.

The “subtraction method” explained below is one of those interpretive devices which is introduced here to complete this chapter. The list of assumptions disclaimed above requires logical answers from the Scripture—much more than the supplied assertions.

One of the first interpretive demands will be to define what is meant by “heavens,” and what is meant by “earth.” Every language has multiple meanings for certain words so how are we to determine *shamayim* (heavens) and *eretz* (earth) in the various contexts? We must further determine whether verse one is a summary/introductory statement or whether actual celestial bodies were created there. Next, what is meant by “*tohu wabohu*” in verse two? Is darkness pictured throughout the cosmos or is it local? The subtraction method resolves these questions with a surprising degree of simplicity.

Expositors have argued over the meaning of *tohu wabohu* (KJV without form and void) without unanimity for centuries. But by starting at day six, when we know the earth was “very good” and subtracting each day’s work, we are able to forcefully evict the “fluidic chaos,” or a vague ball of water concept. “Without form and void” is also unacceptable. This “subtraction method” requires a fully formed, coherent, ocean-covered planet, all created at verse one with the heavens. Here is the rather simple reasoning.

Subtracting day six, we lose Adam and much animal life. The loss of day five leaves plant life untouched but no fish or birds remain. With day four subtracted we lose the stars, and the greater and lesser lights—at least they are not “given forth” (*nathan*) in the air and they cannot function for signs, seasons, days and years. But the planet is still fully formed and very much intact. We still have an ocean, continental lands, the rocky mantle and the gaseous, biologically favorable atmosphere.

Even when we lose day three, only plant life is missing and the continents become submerged. The planet is now totally covered with a sterile ocean but it is very much the same planetary base. As we subtract day two, only the *nonaqueous* atmosphere is lost. The waters are divided between the ocean below and an at-

mosphere of pure water in some clouded form above the ocean. The “waters above” now contact, but remain above, the ocean surface. But light is permitted through this exclusively water-laden atmosphere and we have never lost day and night. An observer riding on the rotating planet would experience evening and morning.

Now subtract day one and we will be at the condition called “*tohu wabohu*.” Let us be careful not to extinguish all light throughout the universe with the loss of day one, because the plain description only specifies the ocean surface as being dark—nothing more. “*The earth was deserted and empty and darkness was on the surface of the ocean.*” Light was absent from the ocean surface because the “cloud of thick darkness” surrounded the newborn earth like “swaddling clothes and a garment” clothe a newborn baby. Apparently, the “waters above” must become so dense, if we subtract day one, that light cannot penetrate and there are no evenings or mornings for an observer to experience.

What do we have left? We have a genuine planet, with its rocky crust enveloped in water, a featureless ocean which itself is also enveloped in an opaque water cloud, giving total darkness to the surface. The earth is barren and empty, waste and void, desolate and waste, in short, the earth is “*tohu wabohu*.”

Now, where is the fluidic chaos imagined by some? It is nonexistent. God did not create a completed biosphere but neither did He create a chaotic earth. It was *not* “unformed and unfilled” or “without form” or “a formless mass” or “formless.” It was barren and empty, yes, but, make no mistake, it was an earth—perfect, fully formed, uninhabited, without chaos, and without a biosphere.** “*Tohu*” may mean chaos in other settings but here it is constrained by the context to mean barren or uninhabited, desolate or deserted. It is a created planet—not a blob of fluid, thus answering the question, “What is meant by ‘earth’” in the opening verse.

The subtraction method appears to be an infallible device for interpretation with no way of squeaking out of the conclusion that *tohu wabohu*, describing the earth, means “deserted and empty” or similar renditions. By no means does this described earth mean “chaos,” (early Greeks) or a mere “mass of water,” (Humphreys 6, p32) or “all the matter in the universe” (Morris 8, p50) or “unformed and unfilled” (Fields 14, p129). It simply does not mean “formless” and when that idea crumbles, ancillary arguments collapse forever with it. Rather the earth is a full-fledged planet created and complete (although minus a biosphere) at verse one.

If the subtraction method can be established, many other conclusions are established, like freight cars follow the locomotive. One of those conclusions invalidates the idea that verse one is only a summary statement because actual hardware is shown to have

** If the sixth day was not chaos, then stripping the earth of the work of the six days must leave a non-chaotic foundational planet.

resulted from creating the heavens and the earth. This eliminates the summary or introduction assumption because a summary deals with topical ideas—not hardware. Another of those conclusions is that *téhowm*, while it does, indeed, mean “abyss,” is merely another name for “the ocean” as in almost all (and perhaps all) usages and should *not* be translated with an obscure “the deep.” There is nothing obscure about the earth and its ocean described here. Furthermore, the subtraction method logically limits the “raqiya” (expanse) to the local atmosphere where birds fly.

Since the earth is shown to be a completed body and entirely covered with ocean, then we must ask, “Does it follow that the heavens were also created at verse one in a similar state of completion, shining and orbiting with the earth?” The answer is, “Yes.” David defines celestial heavens as sun, moon and stars (Psalms 8 and 19). *“When I consider the heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have ordained, what is man that you are mindful of him?”* No exegetical basis exists for defining “heavens” as space or the space-time continuum using twentieth century concepts meaningless to Moses. To take such liberties in word definition is nothing short of bad and misleading exegesis. Why would the earth be created as a planet (established firmly by the subtraction method) and the stars not be corporally created, when the text intones both earth and stars? If the sun and stars were created on the fourth day then would not verse one read, “In the beginning God created the earth and the heavens?” Rather it reads, *In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.*

The subtraction method forcefully evicts the chaos idea of primordial earth and many erroneous concepts prevailing today. Any Bible translation that renders verse two as “without form, formless, a formless mass or unformed” is thus shown to be in basic error with inevitable, consequent confusion. The subtraction method establishes a completed, non-chaotic planet before day one and proves that respected translators, like the rest of us, can err big time.

It is amazing how astute and learned theologians can take such simple language and turn it into an incomprehensible fog. How many brilliant thinkers have seen chaos and disorder from verse two when the planet should be described as “uninhabited and empty” or similar renditions—certainly not chaos. How misleading is a poor translation! One must ask, “How many other errors are promoted by well-meaning but mistaken expositors. I caution myself as well.

THE ROAD TO HARMONY OF SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

The Bible reveals a God who can make the sun stand still

and raise the dead. If He can command the sun to stand still, then His pronouncements which relate to science are reliable whether reasonable to us or not. One could ask, “Which miracle, on days one through six, is the one which God could not do?” No escape is possible from special supernatural intervention in the creation record.

Consider all the attempts to harmonize science and the Bible. In almost all of them, either science is bent to suit an interpretation of Scripture or Scripture is bent to suit an interpretation of science. This need not be, but concessions must be made from each camp to achieve harmony. The current polarization of ideas is not only unnecessary but very damaging as well. Creationists must abandon the mandatory young-universe dogma and non-creationists must accept recent, global Flood testimony—difficult concessions, indeed, for educators who are fixated in a particular paradigm. With wrong premises, wrong conclusions are inevitable. Major mistakes at the beginning of a project beget continuing anomalies thereafter, like an early accounting error mars all the following computations. We must never believe something merely because we *want* to believe it. To do that is to be a prisoner of our unprovable assumptions. Sadly many on both sides of this conflict cannot escape that prison.

The true interpretation of the Bible together with the true interpretation of science will result in perfect harmony, repeat, *perfect harmony* with no disservice to either. Regarding the age of the universe, the Scriptural testimony is first—good science and reason will follow in a veritable choral symphony composed of the messages from both disciplines. That will result in a great outpouring of praise to God. Recent Flood geology is perfectly rational, abundantly evidential and verifiable. But so is an old cosmos and it has biblical credibility. United together, beautiful music will welcome a pleasant, new morning of intellectual dialogue.

This book addresses the *biblical* interpretive errors which prolong dissonance between the Bible and science. For solutions to the *scientific* sources of conflict, Ariel Roth’s book, *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture* (28) is highly recommended as an introduction. Another basic introductory help would be, *Grand Canyon, Monument to Catastrophe* edited by Steve Austin (29). *Origin by Design* (21) by Harold Coffin is also highly recommended. Understanding of Flood geology and the creation view of nature are equally necessary with Scripture for completion of the harmony between the Bible and science. Mainstream evolutionary geologists and their theistic evolutionary children will never allow such harmony. Having invested so much, they have a lot to lose and will not yield to the facts easily.

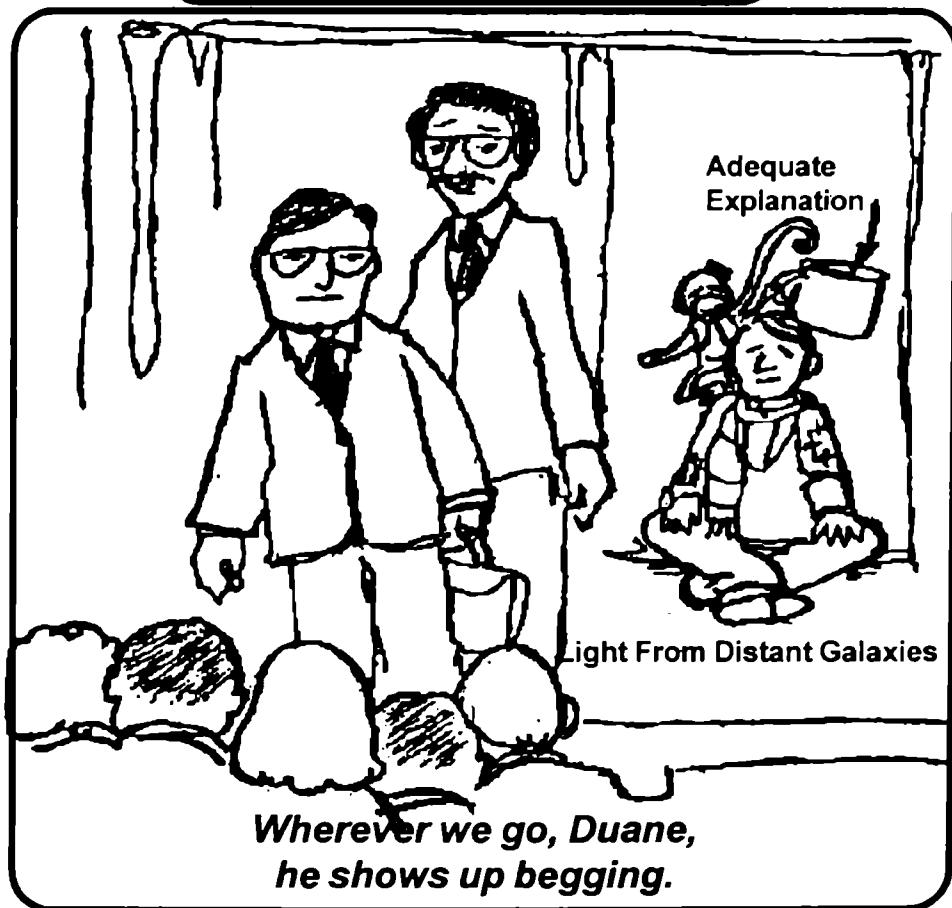
One final reminder. Young universe people often use the expression “old earth” to include the millions of years of Darwinian

evolution and its assumed geological ages. Thus the term "Old Earth" is synonymous for them with millions of years of fossil ages. We must differentiate between the sterile mineral base of planet earth which this book can allow as possibly being millions of years old and the recently created biological world including all the fossils which we agree were mostly deposited recently in the biblical Flood of Noah. This book promotes a young biological earth but an undefined-in-age planet earth and universe.

Young-earth proponents deserve commendation for their confidence in the absolute truth of Scripture. There are plenty of good reasons for that confidence. But let us examine the original text with our thought systems open to revision when confronted with the word of God. What did the Holy Spirit really say? If a mistake is made on this critical subject, all should agree, it can only be described as a grave and grievous blunder.

VARIETY OF TRANSLATIONS IS
PROFITABLE FOR THE FINDING OUT
OF THE SENSE OF SCRIPTURE.

From the introduction to the
King James Version of the Bible



Their record of landmarks will guide the five hunters through the maze of forest and hills to their destination. But a snow-white landscape makes a brand-new world.

CHAPTER 2

HAZARDS IN BIBLE INTERPRETATION

Readers are reminded that the devil is a master deceiver who has plenty of servants. In a world of spiritual warfare, it is not surprising that every important doctrine of Scripture, including origins, has been controverted by intellectuals. We will always find those who would lead us astray with a masked version of “Yea, hath God said ... ?” Even the “very elect” are in danger of being deceived. Peter, himself was rebuked by Paul. Given the great doctrinal controversies, even among acknowledged brethren, can we doubt the reality of potential error? Because *every one of us* is vulnerable to error, we should be driven to our knees—the ultimate place of safety. With spiritual illumination from God, Bible interpretation is not difficult even for children. Without illumination, no amount of intellectual effort is safe. The following are major sources of error.

1. THE HAZARD OF PROOF TEXTS

Just as the “four corners of the earth” (Revelation 7:1 Isaiah 11:12) could conceivably be used as a proof text of a flat earth, so the “proof text” fallacy has contributed to error throughout history. Proof texts must be faced honestly but they can become a red herring in Bible interpretation. *Context* is always central in the interpretation of any passage, and when properly applied, almost always dispels the error of an isolated, proof text. Any passage interpreted with little regard to context has not been safely interpreted.

Exodus 24 says of the elders of Israel, “And they saw the

God of Israel.” And the same Bible says, “No man has seen God at any time.” Are these statements reconcilable? Yes, indeed, but language as superficially plain and contradictory as that should caution us not to jump to conclusions from a reading of Exodus 20:11 or of Genesis 1:16. One could easily use either Exodus 24 or I John 4, just quoted, as proof texts on opposite sides of an argument. Thus, proof texts can be dangerous. Like airtight alibis for a criminal, proof texts look good superficially, but when you get to the bottom, the truth emerges and prevails. Therefore, proof texts must be addressed squarely and answered squarely. But it is dangerous to develop doctrine from a proof text without thorough analysis and coherent assembly of the complete picture presented in Scripture.

2. THE HAZARD OF LESS-THAN-PERFECT TRANSLATION

In Genesis 1:16 the translation “made” (God *made* the stars) carries a different force than the original Hebrew word *asah* which has dozens of contextual nuances. *Without form and void* is better translated *deserted and empty* (or several other options) for Genesis 1:2. The *deep* is a vague word in English but the Hebrew *tehowm* almost always (and perhaps always**) means *ocean*, exactly as we understand it today. The “deep” enclosed Jonah (Jonah 2:6), covered the Egyptians (Exodus 15:5), was dried for fleeing Israel (Isaiah 51:10), had a frozen surface (Job 38:30), looks foamy when stirred (Job 41:32), covers the earth like clothing (Psalm 104:6), made a path for Israel leaving Egypt (Psalm 106:9), covered Tyre (Ezekiel 26:19) and hosted shipwrecked Paul (II Corinthians 11:25). The “deep” is simply the well known ocean—not a vague abyss.

The meaning and use of every word critical to our thesis can be obtained from Brown, Driver and Briggs’ Hebrew and English Lexicon, Davies’ Compendious Hebrew and Chaldean Lexicon, or the popular Strong’s Hebrew Dictionary. Readers should peruse these interpretive aids at critical junctures or consult their own sources. Lexicons can be interpretive, sometimes assigning a specific meaning to a specific Bible reference (and not always correctly) while dictionaries tend to be more general. Thus a Hebrew dictionary may be safer when pursuing the basic interpretation of a passage. Critical words from Strong are listed in appendix D.

3. THE HAZARD OF HUMAN PERSUASION AND SOCIAL PRESSURE

Social pressure can be more powerful than we want to admit. If “850 prophets” within any accepted dogma system support a view, it may take an Elijah to challenge a mistaken establishment. In the case of evolutionism, young-earth creationism, or most any

**Some question Genesis 49:25, “...blessings of the deep that lies below...” as though it meant underground but Joseph’s tribe extended to the Great Sea.

“ism,” the prophets will not fail to arise to represent their system of thought and an enormous intellectual momentum is accumulated. For one devotee to change his mind requires the challenging of many highly qualified and lettered experts. One friend calls it the “tyranny of the incumbent view.” It is philosophical and often political inertia.

The phenomenon of dogmatic inertia deserves close attention. In no way do we suggest that young-earth creationism promotes evil like the worship of Baal or the theory of evolution, but “bandwagon persuasion” exists in any thought system. We can become lodged in a prison of faulty assumptions. If a *vested interest* arises from a long history of past publications or emphases involving an error, or if we become identified politically with any strong but incorrect tradition, only the grace of God and a miracle of humility can extricate us from such a hazard.

Further, if a consensus of prestigious intellectual powers achieve dominance, a strange compulsion is begotten in lesser academists craving approval. Once conservative schools, in the drive for acceptance, compromise the word of God and seminaries become cemetaries—witness many main line churches. But the same intimidation can close anyone’s mind to healthy innovation. Every social stratum faces this force—from the school playground to the research laboratory. God uses it to test our heart for Him going against the tide, uphill, against the wind, upstream to Truth and Love.

Readers of this book are asked to appraise their own location in the political structure around them, whether young-earth creationist, theistic evolutionist or progressive creationist. What kind of intellectual and social earthquake would be triggered by a change in interpretation, especially those of you who are in leadership positions? One might even be convinced of the arguments in this book, but social pressure—the loss of a job or stature in the scientific or even in the creationist community or in the academic world—could become a serious test of moral caliber. A revolution in thinking is essential but it will not be achieved by the politically faint hearted.

4. THE HAZARD OF “READING IN” EXTRANEOUS THOUGHT (EISEGESIS)

Isaiah 28 warns *against* “Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little” Bible butchery methods of study with which men attempt to prove that black is white. It leads to systematic smatterings, rather than a directly derived exegesis. Dr. Willard Aldrich, president emeritus of Multnomah Bible College, Portland, Oregon, warns, “We tend to approach Scripture with our system in mind and then seek to impose that system upon Scripture.” The “here-a-little, there-a-little” method of Bible study multiplies that hazard. Systematic smatterings are the bane of the ecclesiastical world.

It is acceptable to use other scriptures to elaborate a meaning, *but not acceptable to use Scripture from another context for basic interpretation of a passage.* The basic interpretation must be achieved from the local text before other scriptures are used to elaborate or illustrate. Otherwise, the true interpretation is endangered by foreign contexts. Please read Isaiah 28 carefully from NIV. The translation “precept must be upon precept” (verse 10) has misled several generations as though it were a command rather than a warning. That misconstruction illustrates perfectly what has happened in Genesis 1:16. God “made the stars” misleads some readers. Context and the complete picture prefers the translation “God brought forth the stars” or a dozen other better options.

5. THE HAZARD OF MISLEADING DEFINITIONS

An example of this sort of error is the definition of “heavens” as “interstellar space” with no celestial bodies (Starlight and Time 6,p58), or “the component of space in the basic space-mass-time universe” (The Genesis Record 8,p41). Other examples include defining “earth” as “A formless undefined region within the deep” (6,p32), or “The component of matter in the universe ... the basic elements of matter” (8,p41). Forced definitions like these allow the text to mean anything and therefore nothing.

We might as well define “light” as the fundamental particles of knowledge, and “God” as the religious ideas of men, or some other nonsense. “Evening” could easily mean the closing millennia of a long age. Who knows what “water” could mean? One expositor says that water in Genesis 1:2 means “the common stuff from which the heavens, the earth and all that they contain would be produced” (11, p93). These definitions appear to be valiant efforts to prove that “*heavens*” does not mean “heavens” and “*earth*” does not mean “earth” in Genesis 1:1. Words like *water, morning* and *deep*, twisted like this, can mean anything an expositor wants them to mean. The purpose of definition as well as translation should be to give plain meaning to the original text—never should they obscure the meaning as these examples do. Please remove “the deep” and “the space-time continuum” from your mind when interpreting Genesis. *Tehowm* simply means the ocean.

We heartily concur that “day” in Genesis 1 means a literal day, as most creationists insist. Why can we not equally insist that the “heavens” of Genesis 1:1 means sun, moon and stars as David defines, “*When I consider the heavens ... the moon and the stars ...*” (Psalms 8 and 19). The “earth” of verse 1 is the same planet earth of Exodus 15:12, which swallowed Pharaoh’s armies. (Certainly, the dry land did not swallow Pharaoh’s armies!) What God created in verse 1 is not abstract at all, but indicates galaxies, stars

and planets including our own literal, tangible, ocean-covered globe.

Many other ideas could be imposed upon those simple words leading to “pretzel exegesis.” Mistaken definitions for *heavens* and *earth* invalidate the entire interpretations and scenarios where these terms are used. If the words evoke vague concepts in the reader, without support from time-tested lexicography, we probably have the wrong interpretation because the language is forced to bend so extensively. Real problems appear when any system has to resort to exotic word definitions to squeeze Genesis into that system.

“Heavens” in Genesis 1 means either sun, moon and stars in space, or the atmosphere, or a blend of both, just as we use the word today. Never has “heavens” meant empty space. Without standard definitions, the words can be forced to mean anything an expositor wants to promote. Definitions, supplied to prop up an opinion, impose a forbidden twist on the word of God (Deuteronomy 4:2, 12:32). The Bible has endured this abuse more than any other literature and the definitions of Genesis are a prime example.

6. THE HAZARD OF STRONG DELUSION FROM SATAN (II Thessalonians 2)

Satan argued with the Lord about Job’s character which led to a prolonged test. The basic source of Job’s troubles, although allowed by a good and gracious God, was a ruthless devil who was determined to accuse and harass. But Job does not see that; his three friends do not see it; his neighbors and brethren do not see it; Job’s wife does not see it—in fact nobody does and yet Satan is the main problem by far. All the tiresome verbal activity of those religious intellectuals ends up mistaken from a basic overlook of the obvious. The creation/evolution controversy is Satanically harassed in a similar way and he is propagating untruths directed toward all the participants. The same unawareness today of those delusional devices is a strong indicator that he has been successful among us as well as in Job’s day. Religiously and philosophically we live in a world of lies. Face it, we live in a world of lies.

Because men “refused to love the truth ... but delighted in wickedness” God allows strong Satanic delusion. Neither Christians nor scientists are automatically or totally exempt although I do not mean to imply that any who disagree with my thesis belong in the total delusion category. Any of us can be deceived to various degrees, this writer included. The very nature of deception makes the deceived person confident that he is not deceived—a sobering thought for any of us. There are *no intellectual safeguards against spiritual deception*. Rather, if spirituality is minimal or subdued in the intellectual, “the bigger they come, the harder they fall.”

If even the disciples were “kept from recognizing Him,”

are we any better than they? Is it always the other guy who is wrong? “There is a way which *seems* right to a man” (Proverbs 16:25) but in the end he may be dead wrong. We all know of entire organizations—ecclesiastical, academic and fraternal, with superb intellectual leadership—which are collectively deceived. This should drive each of us to earnest, continuing prayer. As Christians we ultimately repose in the trustworthiness of our beloved Savior who said, “If you continue in my word ... you will know the truth and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32). His promise brings confidence to the believer’s heart. But we will surely be deceived if we do not continue to let Jesus’ word saturate our minds. Deception is not inevitable for the Christian, but take note. If the devil is not successful in lying *to* us he will certainly lie *about* us as he did with Job and as he will about any true interpretation of origins. Important truths will always face malicious, insidious Satanic opposition.

7. THE HAZARD OF IGNORING SIMPLE HERMENEUTICS

Volumes have been written on hermeneutics (the art of interpretation). The most essential item is reduced here to one simple statement because of its singular importance to the present question: *Accept the normal and usual meaning of words unless compelling reasons require a rare meaning.* This is most important.

8. THE HAZARD OF CREDITING BIBLE WRITERS WITH KNOWLEDGE OF MODERN SCIENCE

Under inspiration, Bible writers expressed nothing in error or contradictory to established science, yet they spoke from their own ordinary observation (excepting strictly prophetic utterances). The reference to “night and day” sets the viewpoint from the earth where man lives and makes observations. Since they spoke within the confines of their understanding, we should read them from that frame of reference—as things appeared to them—all the while aware that God preserved the prophets from any scientific error. While the Bible does not teach geocentrism, where the earth is assumed to be the center of the universe, yet the observer speaks as things appear. Indeed, we all do much of that even today, including our best scientists. The sun comes up and goes down for scientist and poet and the reader’s perspective in Genesis must be “earth centric” as well.

9. THE HAZARD OF A FAULTY PARADIGM

Behind every interpretation, a set of assumptions or a paradigm—a framework or scheme of thinking—controls the direction of our conclusions. *A faulty thought framework creates a permanent misdirection on all collateral conclusions.* As a ring in a

bull's nose easily leads a subdued animal, so a mistaken paradigm or a partially mistaken paradigm leads to faulty interpretation as it relates to that framework, no matter where one turns in Scripture.

Faith in our paradigm is really faith in our faith, or faith in our religion or theological view. This bypasses the Person in Scripture—God Himself—as well as distorting His message. Such misplaced faith cannot fail to skew interpretation. In Scripture study, our paradigm must be formed inductively, from the general view, the total, big picture. Creationists promote a *partially* faulty paradigm when a young universe is assumed.

Unwarranted bias makes interpretation of the origins passages predictable, but only contorted language can sustain a faulty interpretation. For example, the same writers who assume the “day four” creation of the sun, moon and stars, might translate Genesis 1:2 as “without form and void” (which, to them, means an undefined fluid). But those who regard Genesis 1:1 as the creation of actual celestial hardware including planet earth, might translate the same words “deserted and empty” (a tangible planet). Thus, the assumptions lead the translations, constrained by the assumed framework. “Paradigm fixation” is surely a major obstacle to interpretive unity.

10. THE HAZARD OF EXCESSIVE RELIANCE ON INTELLECTUAL SKILL

Keenly intelligent people sometimes neglect the more important direction that comes from “crying unto God for knowledge and lifting up your voice for understanding” (Proverbs 2:1-6). No disrespect is intended, but in matters involving spiritual illumination, the prerequisite of urgent prayer exceeds every other consideration. It is possible to intellectualize simple language until it becomes a meaningless fog, capable of most any interpretation that the intellectual wants to promote. Children might do better.

God has preserved the integrity of His word by establishing, first of all, a literal, factual document. Behind the primary, literal meaning He has hidden secondary meanings. In Genesis 22, the literal scene depicting Abraham and Isaac hides a marvelous, awe-inspiring picture of the coming Christ. The first task is to get the plain, literal story. Only then look behind it for deeper truths. In the Genesis account of creation, first get the literal words. This principle minimizes abuse of the Scriptures. If we try to see a figurative or symbolic meaning *before* recognizing the literal, or if we resort to unusual definitions, there is no control on interpretation. It runs wild.

Occasionally, the Hebrew text allows more than one possible interpretation. Conclusions may be disputed even among the best scholarship. In the body of this book, efforts are made to re-

solve these disputes by using innovative methods available to the learned as well as the naive. In cases where scholars differ, uncertainties of language analysis can sometimes be resolved by bypassing them with other devices. Believers from widely differing persuasions might be brought to a unified voice about origins by utilizing these simple tools within the framework of an understandable, coherent, and literal picture. The biblical interpretation which results, as presented in this book, might be called the *biosphere model* of the six day work in Genesis.

On controversial subjects, readers must peel away layers of tradition down to bedrock. Then, sequestered as much as possible from prevailing ideas, we must read as if we were first-time observers. We must entertain only concepts derived from the plain textual language, without filtering them through preconceptions (easier preached than reached). Contrived explanations and forced interpretations are the legacy of approaching Scripture with a tradition to defend. We must open our minds to new interpretations if the text indicates.

An ounce of understanding is worth a pound of grammar and syntax, as long as the understanding does not violate the conventions of grammar and syntax. Even further, an ounce of understanding is worth a ton of grammar and syntax if some basic assumptions are leading the interpretation astray.

Does the age of the universe matter all that much? True, the views we are dealing with are not cardinal doctrines essential to the Christian faith. But errors have the potential to inflict much damage.

Suppose the universe is in fact billions of years old. If we insist upon its youth instead, claiming biblical proof, we foster grave doubts about the message of Scripture. Nathan said to David, “By doing this you have given much occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme.” In like manner, it will give no glory to God for a creationist to support a factual error. On the contrary, it does much harm. When a foundational footing is faulty the entire package is likely to be rejected. This book has been written out of grief for that unnecessary burden—the mandatory young universe assumption.

It is said everyone has a right to his own opinion. But do we have a right to publish a damaging opinion before we have investigated all of its negatives? Deep moral responsibility is involved here. Even spiritually minded creationists can interpret the Bible incorrectly. Jesus’ choice disciples “did not understand what this meant. It was hidden from them, so they did not grasp it” (Luke 9:45). That was limited to people of those days, right? It couldn’t happen today. After all, we moderns see clearly. But so thought the flat earth people. History reminds us of a real hazard stalking each one of us

with no exceptions. Self-delusion is nothing new.

A more accurate interpretation of Genesis is claimed in this work, but no aspersions are cast toward creationists of other persuasions. Friendly, brotherly dialogue can improve our understanding. After all, Jesus' disciples demonstrate powerfully to us that no one is automatically exempt from potential error, not even united groups of people.

I will cite here two examples (among many) of mistaken conclusions by expositors well known in creation science. It should be plain that my objections do not represent any personal disfavor. On the contrary, these are given in a context of deep appreciation, deep love and a deep indebtedness to the pioneering heroes.

Dr. Henry Morris, to whom we creationists owe such an extreme debt of gratitude, gives an example of bad exegesis spawned by mistakes made at the beginning of the Genesis narrative. His faulty definitions of "heaven and earth" have been particularly destructive because of his towering and well-deserved prestige within creationism. He rightly complains of forced interpretations of Genesis 1, coerced by pressures from evolutionary academics, but then he proceeds to force his own definitions of heavens (the space time continuum) and earth (all the matter of the universe) because of a complete misread of day four. The subtraction method might have steered him and multitudes of others with similar views into the safe haven of simple biblical literalism. The correct interpretation comes with language understandable to any child. Compare "face of the deep" (anyone's guess as to what that means) with "surface of the ocean" (plain language to any child) for an example. If Genesis can only be fully interpreted by scientists or theologians we are in big trouble. Compare "firmament of heaven" with "expanse of air" for another example of obscure versus plain.

Dr. James Stambaugh, creationist theologian, provides one more of many examples of exegesis gone astray because of errors made in the initial sentences of Genesis. He insists that "Let there be light" using the jussive (imperative) proves that the stellar heavens could not have existed (giving off light) before day one, for the implication from jussive is that light came into existence where there was no light before. Well, he is right about the imperative mode but wrong about his application. It is freely acknowledged that light did not exist before day one *in the location specified* (namely, on the surface of the ocean) so his objection is fully met if we pay attention to its limited geographical scope. Also, a poll of numerous Hebrew department heads finds Dr. Stambaugh lonely in his view that the creation of the heavens is linguistically forced as a part of day one.

Someone should write a book on the philosophy of erroneous interpretation and mistaken opinions analyzing the root cause of

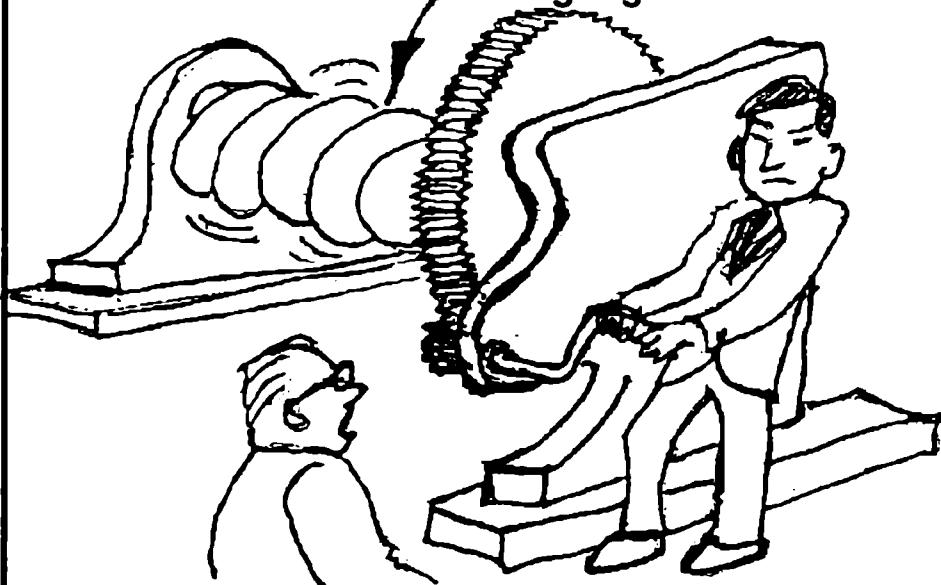
dogmatic error. Certainly there is plenty of material to fill many volumes. Such a book could be a help to us who differ in perspective. Consider how vastly divergent views are promoted with equal certainty and fervor by intellectually astute apologists. In world religions of all kinds, denominations within Christianity, and worldwide political philosophies, the confusion of Babel prevails. But each tongue is thoroughly convinced that it alone is right. Truth is "hidden from the wise and prudent" (Matthew 11:25). Most college courses in logic are taught by logical people who have rejected the truth of God's word. What an irony!

We should think, realistically, that if, even for the disciples, "the meaning was hidden from them" (Luke 18:34, Luke 24:16), any one of us can be subject to error. Perversions of God's word are a symptom of "meanings hidden" and serve to discredit His truth. In the age-of-the-universe debate, some of us may be mistaken, even at the top of our voices. So certain, so sure, and yet so mistaken. As the Bible dogmatists of Jesus' day proved that Jesus was not the Messiah (Search and look for no prophet rises out of Galilee.) so, in the present debate, dogmatists quoting Exodus 20:11 and the fourth day proof texts may be embarrassed at the coming denouement.

The disciples were not mistaken on the essentials, and neither are creationists, but some are led astray interpreting Exodus 20 and some parts of Genesis 1. Hopefully, this work will help to unveil eyes, and arrest the damage being inflicted on potential believers.

THE COUNSELS OF HELL

Plain Bible Language



*Ever since the garden of Eden
our instructions have been simple.*

Whenever God says anything, just twist it.

This cartoon cautions every Bible student—author included.

*The first test comes when a hunter
calls, "Wrong way, men,
here we go right."*

CHAPTER 3

FOUR FOUNDATIONAL IMPERATIVES

Zedekiah assumed the Lord would deliver Judah. Israel assumed Ai was a pushover. Disaster followed both assumptions. In chapter one we listed eight widely accepted assumptions which obscure the meaning of Genesis. This chapter addresses four of those ideas which have diverted young-earth creationists from the truth of Genesis. Trouble awaits if we ignore warnings.

1. GENESIS 1:1-2 RECORDS AN EVENT—NOT A SUMMARY

Genesis 1:1 simply records one stupendous creative work: “In the beginning God created the heavens and earth”—it does *not* summarize the following text. A topical summary is achieved if it can be removed, leaving the rest of the text intact and complete in itself. Imagine the Bible beginning at verse 2, “And the earth was deserted and empty and darkness was on the surface of the ocean.” Well, from whence came the earth? To say, “God had just created earth,” rules out the summary or topic sentence idea for verse 1, because the first verse is essential in order to make sense of the next statement. Verse 2 is incomplete without verse 1. A topic announcement in Hebrew, typically, lacks a verb. Inclusion of the verb indicates actual work was accomplished in verse 1.

By contrast, the first verse of the genealogy in Matthew is clearly a summary statement because it can be removed without compromising text that follows. “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham.” The text does just as

well without verse 1 in Matthew (Notice no verb.) Remove the first verse in Genesis, however, and the text becomes incoherent and stranded. Could a book of beginnings omit a central item such as the creation of the planet earth? No, verse 1 neither summarizes nor introduces a topic. Instead, it simply records the first major event.

Introductions or summaries establish topical generalities, leaving the details for the body of the text. Genesis discloses many details about the atmosphere, sea, land formations and biology in the verses following verse 1, but not one detail about the *planet* earth itself. It assumes the basic earth already exists after verse one when it refers to the completed planet in the following description: “And the earth was deserted and empty and darkness was upon the surface of the ocean.” An ocean-covered planet is described in total darkness from a thick cloud and a heavenly host of stars is also depicted (Job 38:9, and see Exodus 10:22, 23 for a sample). Since verse 2 describes an “earth,” it obviously must exist as a planetary body at the time the description begins. *By the same token the heaven of stars already exists from verse 1.*

Is this a valid conclusion? There existed an ocean surface covered with “the waters that were above” and total darkness. Day three demonstrates the existence of land *under* that ocean, land which would eventually emerge. The planet, complete though as yet unfurnished, existed in verse 2, having no visible land forms. Therefore, if the earth exists, the heavens, which includes sun, moon and stars, also exist. To call verse 1 a summary complicates plain language and creates an interpretive fog. (Verse 16, “He made two great lights and the stars also” is easily explained below.)

A clear summary is given later in chapter 2:1: “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all the host of them.” This text fulfills all the requisites of a summary. A double summary is not very sensible. If verse 1 does not summarize, we can read this chapter literally without complicating the plain language.

2. GENESIS 1:1-2 PRECEDES THE FIRST DAY CHRONOLOGICALLY

Each “day” of Genesis 1, without exception, begins with the expression, “And God said...” or better, “*Then* God said.” Therefore, verses 1 and 2 are not part of day one, but precede it. No one disputes this regarding days two through six. Why dispute it for day one? Are there grounds to assume verse 1 to be part of the first day? Would not the clause, “*Then* God said...,” be additional strong evidence that God created the stellar heavens before there were any earth days?

This conclusion becomes clearly evident when you begin with the sixth day, then work backwards to determine the first day.

Here it follows. Genesis 1: 24 begins the sixth day, “Then God said...”; verse 20 begins the fifth day, “Then God said...”; verse 14, the fourth day, “Then God said...”; verse 9, the third day, “Then God said...”; verse 6, the second day, “Then God said...”; verse 3 begins day one, “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’...”

The first two verses record creative activity which precede day one. Even though we find other references to “God said,” the clause still provides a clear marker for the start of each day. Day one starts with God’s command for light upon the darkened ocean.

Job 38:1-11 is a primary creation passage (*identical in creation context with Genesis 1*). God uses two metaphors in Job to describe earth’s creation. One is a *building* with foundation, cornerstone, a builder’s measuring line, bars and doors, as when God laid the foundation of the earth. The other metaphor compares the birth of the earth with the *birth of a baby* when the infant is wrapped in swaddling clothes and an outer garment. The Job account is not a daily chronology as Genesis (albeit written earlier and arguably should be considered first) but Yahweh, “I AM” clearly says, “I made clouds (the earth’s) garment and thick darkness its swaddling band.”

There can be no “day one” until light penetrates the planetary shroud described here even though abundant light filled the universe elsewhere. As long as the “waters that were above” (thick darkness described in Genesis 1:2-7 and Job 38) clothed a newborn earth in its swaddling band/garment of darkness, there can be no days on earth. How long did darkness prevail “on the surface of the ocean” before day one? That is not defined in the Bible so no one knows.

An event from the history of ancient Israel illustrates this. Israel endured Babylonian captivity for seventy years, then returned to restore the worship of God in Jerusalem. After laying the foundation for the temple, the people became discouraged and distracted for sixteen years. Finally, encouraged by the prophecy of Haggai, they worked intensely for four years to complete the temple over the twenty-year-old foundation. In four years they erected the temple—but on a foundation built much earlier (Ezra 5 and 6).

So it was in Genesis. “For in six days, Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them.” Yes, and in four years, the returned Jews made the courtyard, the temple, the holy place, “and all that is in them,” although the foundation existed many years before the building was begun. This is a strikingly appropriate illustration of the cosmogony in the record of Haggai, because the six days of biosphere work were done on a foundational planet which was created earlier—perhaps much earlier.

First, God created the universe, including light-producing galaxies throughout, then “waited” like a mother hen over her brood at night time (end of verse 2) until the light from the remotest galaxy

arrived (we may guess), and then He began to work on the atmospheric heaven and the land for six days. The time lapse between the stellar creation and the first earth day is open to speculation. A young universe is certainly not ruled out from biblical considerations, even though an older age could be presumed from astronomical measurements. Neither is an instantaneous creation of the planet earth ruled out. As long as God does the creating, the process may have been instantaneous or it may have been progressive. *From the record in Genesis*, it may have been 6,000 years ago or billions.

The Bible does not specify the age of the stars. Just as we cannot compute the dimensions of space without astronomical measurements, so we cannot know the beginning of time from the Bible without physical measurement and some unprovable assumptions. But after God created and waited, "*Then God said, Let there be light,*" and the darkened planet saw its first dawn.

Possibly God put such a vast span of history into just two verses because it is not central to the biblical message which focuses on God's dealing with man. Eons of time before the first day deal with fire and rocks but have no bearing on morality or spirituality or salvation for man. Knowledge of galaxies and pulsars per se contribute nothing to God's redemptive purpose. It is entirely reasonable to dispose of that non-redemptive history in two sentences.

Correct interpretation demands separation of stellar creation from the first day activities on the ocean surface. Verse 2 does not say how long darkness prevailed over the surface of the ocean before God's command established day one. Therefore, we do not know. Nor do we know the relative time of creation of the galaxies versus planet earth. The earth may be relatively young and the galaxies much older; no details accompany the opening sentence.

3. ASAH MEANS TO DO OR WORK—NOT CREATE, IN GENESIS 1:16 AND IN EXODUS 20:11

We must determine the meaning of critical verbs by its context and by usages elsewhere. Exodus 20:11 could be translated, "For six days God prepared (*asah*)—(or *fashioned* or *produced*, or *arranged* or *worked on* or *did*)—the heavens, the earth and the sea and rested the seventh day..." Any of those suggested verbs gives a different slant to the English verb "made." Esther "prepared" a banquet. Same word—*asah*. She didn't make anything. She just arranged, ordered, and fashioned it. Abraham "dressed" a calf, making a meal for his visitors. Again, *asah*. Abraham did not "make" a calf, he merely prepared it. Joash's carpenters and builders "*worked upon*" the house of the LORD, (II Kings 12:11). Again, we have the same word, *asah*, demonstrating the sense in which God worked upon the heavens and earth for six days—giving man

an example of work and rest. Fuse together all these translated verbs into a single verbal thought. Our closest English word, “*did*,” is our best representation but not fully adequate. The Hebrew meaning is a blend of several English meanings for this context.

Joash’s carpenters did not “make” the house of the LORD, for it had been completed long before, but they worked on it as they repaired it. The same applies here in Genesis. The creative activity that occurred during the six days and the rearranging (day three) can all be called “work.” If we could meld the translated words together, prepare—work—produce—do—bring forth, the blend of meaning would better reflect the original nuance of *asah* in this context. *Asah* can be transitive as when we “do” our dishes. The dishes are not “made” by “doing” them and neither were the stars.

Compare Genesis 1:31 (KJV) “God saw everything he had *made*” with CEV “God looked at what he had *done*.” Compare Genesis 2:2, “God ended his work which he had *made* and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he *made*.” (KJV) with NKJV “God ended his work which he had *done* and rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had *done*.” NIV has it, “God had finished the work he had been *doing* ... he rested from all the work of creating which he had *done*.” RSV is similar. All italicized words are *asah* as on the fourth day, hence “*God did two great lights and the stars*” on day four is fully legitimized.

Jonah says, “The LORD made (*asah*) the sea and the *dry land*” (Jonah 1:9). Genesis clearly pictures the “making” of dry land as a rearrangement, “Let the waters be gathered together in one place and let the *dry land appear*.” The dry land was “made” by exposing the submerged land, and yet Jonah says “Yahweh made (*asah*) the *dry land*.” The day four “making” of the stars happened in the same way. God simply commanded the obscuring waters in the skies to be gathered together or dissipate and two great lights and the stars were *made*. The sun, moon and stars of day four had been created already (if we accept the simplicity of verse 1), and on day four the great lights of heaven were “made” or “brought forth” or “done.” As hidden buds are “brought forth” into a splendid profusion of blossoms, and as the land formations were “made to appear” out of an obscuring ocean, so luminaries were “made” or “brought forth” or “put forth” or “set in order” (*asah* verse 16) and “set” or “given forth” (*nathan* verse 17) into the air on day four.

Jonah 1:9 really demolishes any confidence that God created the stars on day four. As the land existed but certainly was not “dry” when submerged, so the stars existed but were not “given forth” in a clouded atmosphere until day four. The view and interpretation are inescapably “earth centric”—as anyone would have perceived events from man’s residence. To fully grasp this is cru-

cial to the issue. Picture the scene as though you were witnessing the celestial bodies emerging from behind the dispersing clouds.

The reference in Jonah leads to a sensible parallel between days three and four and removes the creation concept even when the text is translated, “God *made* two great lights and the stars” on day four. But it requires a reasoning process which ordinary readers would not guess from a superficial perusal of the passage. “Look,” they might say, “The passage plainly says God made the stars on day four. God said it. I believe it. That settles it.” Few readers would think about the implications of Jonah’s quote, the wide range of uses for the verb, the strong evidence for star creation at verse one, the biosphere context for day four, and the unreasonableness of an ephemeral light source at day one. For this reason, alternate choices for the translation of the Hebrew verb are needed and prove to be less ambiguous than the common translations. When any translation ends up obscuring the true meaning, then better choices which satisfy the demands of grammar and syntax must be employed.

Obviously, the critical word underlying the interpretation is *asah*—which has the basic meaning of “to do.” The KJV translates it no less than seventy four different ways—yes, seventy four different translations for *asah*! All translations, English and non-English, use a similar latitude with this Hebrew word. A bundle of red flags waves before any interpreter who hangs a great theological conclusion on a non-Hebrew translation. It is better to compare *asah* to our word *do* rather than *make* because *do* is a general word in English just as *asah* is in Hebrew: “For six days Yahweh did the heaven and earth, the sea.” Although it is a bit awkward in English to use *did*, it better represents the general meaning of *asah* and is not awkward at all in Hebrew.

All seventy four translations are needed to cover the nuances and contexts represented by this word; that is our point. A translator has to make the proper choice according to each context, and no translator can claim to be infallible. The choice remains an option and is open to review by anyone who grasps the context.

Consider our English word “set” which, like *asah*, has about 75 different meanings recorded in Webster’s unabridged dictionary. We set a table, play sets of tennis, set the teeth of a saw, the sun sets, we agree on setting a date, we set our minds on a purpose, the hen sets, we set prisoners free, set the stopwatch, set a price, set gems in a crown, cement sets, we set our jaw in determination, we set out on a journey, we go set in a card game, we set out plants in the garden, and snide remarks do not set well with us (just to name a few). The analogy with *asah* compels us to regard context as the supreme judge in translation, especially for widely applied verbs. (We could make a similar list using “do,” “did” or “done” which is

the closest English equivalent to the Hebrew *asah*.) Notice how easily a single added word of context controls the interpretation and, because we are so familiar with the vernacular English, there is little ambiguity of meaning.

Asah carries every bit as many functions and meanings—one of two most widely applied words in all Scripture. (The other one is *nathan*—*to give or put*, which is also critical to the day four interpretation). Context is sovereign in determining the choice of each translated word with regard to all flexible verbs. The context of any passage can be determined by anyone who understands the general picture. Hebrew grammar and syntax can help some, but far more important is grasping the big picture which is available to any reader with or without knowledge of the original language. Working from multiple translations, prayerfully striving for understanding, any student can achieve a contextual understanding.

The “subtraction method,” introduced at the end of chapter one, helps to create the determinant context for day four because a created and fully formed planet earth is coerced for verse one, plainly implying that the heavens were also formed and functioning. This limits the choices for rendering *asah* on day four. Additional contextual force comes from the specified *completion* of the separation of day from night by the first visibility of sun, moon and stars.

Rendered as “made” one *might* get the meaning right, (God “made” the sun and stars) but rendered as “brought forth” or “put forth” it is much easier to grasp the contextually driven meaning. Other options might be *arranged, furbished, brought to pass, put into execution, did, put in order*,—all preferred over “made” because of the confusion “made” tends to bring. If “brought forth” is an *allowed* translation, then it (or similar expressions) is the *preferred* translation because it makes the whole passage coherent and reasonable without the special pleading of a temporary light for the first three days and an unlikely isolated planet earth minus the rest of the universe until day four. “Made” gives some people a concrete idea of “create” on day four, when no such concrete idea is present in the Hebrew. Therefore, we need to search for the verb which *does* reflect the original and avoids putting extraneous ideas into the reader’s mind. It must clarify rather than confuse.

Some dare to say that *asah* is interchangeable with *bara* in Genesis 1. Hardly. “Asah” properly interchanges with “bara” (create) in only a few contexts. Even in Genesis 1:26, 27 where the text expresses one view, “Let us *make* man in our image” (*asah*), and then another view, “So God *created* man in his own image” (*bara*), a common device in Hebrew, the verbs are not interchangeable—only supplemental.

If we say, regarding a sport, “We routed the opposing team;

we really stomped them,” routed and stomped can be interchanged in position but not in meaning. We might say, “The battle carnage shocked all of us, it sickened us.” Again, the verbs are not interchangeable in meaning but supplemental. Sickness and shock differ. A common fallacy holds that *asah* and *bara* can interchange but they cannot in most contexts. To call a word which is so loose as to require 74 translation options interchangeable with *bara* is to require interchanges with dozens of concepts and contexts. Is there no end to interchangeability?

Significantly, all references of *asah* translated *made* can be rendered *did*, whereas few or none of the *do* translations can make sense as *make*. It’s all right to translate *asah* as *made* in some contexts, as long as we understand that it could be translated a dozen other ways and keep the flexible meaning of Hebrew. But *did*, allowing for some awkwardness, works almost anywhere. Nehemiah 9:6 records, “Yahweh … *made* the heaven of heavens” in a clear reference to the entire cosmos, using *asah*. Everything that God has *created ex nihilo* (out of nothing) has also been *done* by Him, but not everything that God *does* involves *creation ex nihilo*. Again, the words are not interchangeable.

When God specifies, “For *six days* the LORD worked on*** the air, the dry land*** and the sea and all that is in them,” we should limit our view to work accomplished during the six days only. We may *not* include creation of the galaxies, accomplished before there were any days on earth. Also, the meaning of *worked on* is more accurate for *asah* in that context because *work* is the subject matter of the fourth commandment (Also Genesis). Exodus 20:11 and 31:17 do not deal *primarily* with origins. How unwise, therefore, to make a proof text of Exodus 20:11 when the critical verb is clearly general, certainly not interchangeable with “create,” and the primary subject is the Sabbath precedent of rest after *work*.

The terms followed by *** are my preferred translations and are not found in the common translations of this specific verse. However, they are translated that way elsewhere frequently. *Asah*, usually translated *did*, is translated *work* or *wrought* 75 times in KJV. *Shamayim*, usually translated *heaven*, is translated *air* 17 times. *Erets*, usually translated *earth*, is translated *land* 22 times in KJV. Thus, there is clearly a respectable precedent for the suggested renderings. They especially fit the context of Exodus 20:11 because God spells out the definitions of air and land on days two and three which is the *specified* setting. If the reader prefers the common translations, the meaning is still the same. But the sense is more easily grasped if we choose “*work*,” “*air*” and “*land*.”

Abraham *did* the calf for his visitors. Esther *did* the banquet. The carpenters *did* the repairs. God *did* the dry land. And

God *did* the great lights and stars on day four. In all cases *asah* expresses work of rearrangement or processing existing material.

An observer from earth would have exclaimed, “Look what God did today! He did the dry land yesterday and today He did two great lights and the stars!” This may sound awkward in English, but it is a very normal use of *asah* in Hebrew and it brings us closer to the common usage of that word in Moses’ day. *Once the verb is loosened to its original nuance, there remains absolutely no force requiring creation of the stars on the fourth day.*

Some will remonstrate yet again, “But it says plainly that God made the stars on day four.” Not really. If the thought is *create* (or *assemble* out of pre-star materials), then the text does not say that at all. If the thought is *to bring about, perform, gain, reach, as to make a noise, to make plans* (Webster), or the biblical use to make mirth, to make an agreement, to make a wailing or to make a name (all *asah*) then that meaning can be accepted in this context. In that sense Abraham *made* the calf for serving his visitors. He peeled away the skin, removed the entrails, and roasted it. Well, God peeled away some clouds on day four and *made* the stars. Psalm 135 says God makes lightning. How does he? By rolling air masses and moisture particles around. How does God make stars? Well, on day three He rolled away the ocean to make land and on day four He rolled away the fog to make stars. The “making” is observed from the earth just as Joshua saw the sun stand still as viewed from the earth. But, while using “made” is acceptable, it would be better to use a selection more suited to the context. After all there are more than six dozen available. God “brought forth” or “produced” or “put into execution” the celestial lights on day four.

To summarize this point: God “made” the stars by clearing away the obscuring cloud cover, just as He “made” the dry land by clearing away the obscuring ocean water.** The example of Jonah 1:9 opens the day four interpretation to a much more sensible understanding of the text. Extensive investigation of hundreds of usages show that *asah* can be more clearly rendered than to use “made” in Genesis 1:16 and Exodus 20:11. “Worked on” or “did” is better.

4. EXODUS 20:11 MEANS AIR, LAND AND SEA—NOT STARS, PLANET EARTH AND SEA

Suppose someone said, “For six days God made the stellar heavens, the planet earth and Greenland.” The listener objects that since the planet earth includes Greenland, it is obtuse and redundant to mention its creation in that way. But to say, “For six days God worked on the air, the land, and the sea,” is not redundant. Each noun specifies a separate component of the planet earth. In Gen-

**The expression on day four, God gave forth the lights ... to “separate the light from the darkness,” indicates plainly that the separation of light from darkness on day one was incomplete. The atmosphere was not fully transparent until day four.

esis 1:1, the “heavens” refer to the stellar heavens and the “earth” refers to the planet earth, because no air or visible land existed as yet. But in days two and three, God Himself defines “*heavens*” to refer to the atmosphere and “*earth*” to refer to the continental lands. Two meanings, easily determined by context were common in Moses’ day. To which does God refer in Exodus 20:11? If He means the stellar heavens and the planet earth, then the term *seas* is redundant since the word *earth* (planet earth) already includes *seas*. But if the terminology used refers to the work which God did during six days (after there were days), it could, indeed, refer to atmospheric heavens, continental earth, oceanic seas and all that is in them (that is, the biosphere). This language outlines precisely the six day work. (Please see the discussion of a hendiadys or merism and other points of grammar in Appendix “E.”)

Furthermore, it was *during* the six days when God specifically defined heaven and earth to mean air and continental land. When God says, “For six days Yahweh worked on the heavens and the earth,” it is hermeneutically *required* to use the definitions supplied by God Himself during those very same six days—atmosphere (air) and dry land. Nowhere in the Bible are words specifically defined by anyone, let alone God—only in Genesis 1 and He is defining *familiar components* of the biosphere—night, day, air, land and sea. For six days God worked on the biosphere. The same contextual area being addressed, the same *simple* definitions *must* be utilized.

This is important enough for another try: The alternative definition required for “heaven and earth,” namely sun, moon and stars in space, is specifically denied during the six-day activity, because the atmosphere/dry land definitions are purposely supplied inside those identically designated six days. But in verse 1, the “sun, moon and stars” definition is the only possible meaning, because neither air nor dry land existed in the beginning, before any earth days could be counted. We must necessarily interpret Exodus 20:11: “For six days Yahweh worked on the atmosphere, the continental land and the oceanic sea, and all that is in them,” that is, the biosphere. Thus, the creation of the galaxies took place some time before the six days and no man knows when. Day four relates only to signs, and seasons—impossible functions under obscuring clouds.

The focus of the text is on the *biosphere*. Each and every day of the six days contributes to preparations for man’s home, including day four when the luminaries were “given forth” in the air to allow man to measure time and seasons. Those lamps were excluded from the atmosphere by remnants of that cloud of thick darkness (Job 38) until they were “given forth** in the expanse of heaven,” allowing man to measure seasons.

Think of the planet during the six days as a house, unfur-

** “God set the great lights in the expanse of air” (verse 17) is better translated, “God gave them forth (*nathan*) in the expanse of air.”

nished and empty. Then renters contract for it as a furnished home, so the landlord fills it with furniture and accouterments suitable for habitation. This is what God did during the six days. The house was already there, uninhabited and empty, unprepared as a biosphere for life. The heavens, earth and sea of Exodus 20 refer exclusively to the furniture and equipment for man's home** arranged during those six days. Even day one, "Let there be light," was not a cosmic-wide event, but applies only to the area "clothed in a thick darkness of clouds"—the dark ocean surface which would become the biosphere.

Zechariah refers to "heavens that drop down dew" (8:12). The "atmosphere" in this reference was made on day two. He makes no reference to stars. It may be that Hebrew interpreters did not distinguish clearly between the heaven of air and the heaven of stars, and often the word may represent a blend of both. But when one talks about rain, Hebrew thinking aside, we today, can only think "atmosphere," and the language certainly permits that.

Even today, we do not always distinguish between the atmospheric heavens and the stellar heavens. We say of a strikingly colorful sunset with radiant clouds and the new moon peeking through on an indigo blue background, "How magnificent are the heavens tonight!" Everyone knows that when we say "the heavens are threatening rain," our meaning is quite different from saying, "Orion is visible in the heavens." The heavens must be distinguished by us today even though an Israelite may not have bothered. Context determines the meaning, although often a distinction is immaterial.

Most of the references to "heaven" in the Bible simply refer to atmosphere, and most references to "earth" refer to lands. Where used together, "heaven and earth," stellar heavens and the planet are usually indicated, but not always (as in Psalm 135:6-7) where three elements (air, land and sea) are specified. The language of Exodus 20:11 specifically prohibits that use with the self-imposed limiter of the six-day context, for which earth and heaven are defined as land and air. The reader cannot propose any other definition relative to those identified six days when God specifically gave us those definitions during those very same days. Hermeneutically, it is simply not allowed. All three words, heavens, earth, and sea are used together only in Psalms 135, 146:6 and Exodus 20 and have identical meaning in all three passages—air, land and sea.

Our English word "country" has a similar double usage. When we say, "I'm from the country" we mean countryside, but if we say, "There is no better quarterback in the country," we mean the nation. Every language without exception has multiple meanings for certain words. Indeed, we use the terms "heavens" and also "earth" just as the Hebrews did, in a double manner, determinable only by context. The context of Exodus 20:11 relates to the

Psalm 115:16 "The heavens are the Lord's heavens but the earth he has given to the sons of men."

activity of the six days—not celestial creation. To apply celestial creation to Exodus 20:11 violates the “six day” context of the fourth commandment. Exodus 15:12 states, “The earth (*erets*) swallowed” Pharaoh’s armies, when actually the sea swallowed them. Earth there means the general planetary mass, certainly not the dry land. Because the “earth” of Genesis 1:2 had no dry land at all, it can only refer to the planetary mass as well.

Ken Ham argues for literal days (“For in six days...”) in Exodus 20:11 thusly, “This is a direct reference to God’s creation week in Genesis 1. To be consistent (and we must be) whatever is used for the meaning of the word ‘day’ in Genesis 1 must also be used here” (in Exodus 20:11). (53,p169) Amen to that.

Ken, we have enjoyed friendly contacts for many years and I deeply appreciate your work and your organization, but I plead with you and all creationists to “be consistent” and use the definitions which are supplied by God for “heavens” (air or expanse where birds fly) and “earth” (dry land) consistently in Exodus 20:11. Having the same six-day context *demands* the same definitions. And be further faithful to its obvious “work” context by rendering it, “For six days God worked on the air, the land and the sea...” This verse says nothing about the creation of the stars or the cosmos.

As small children assume the sun moves around the earth, but with maturity and instruction a gestaltic transformation occurs to them, so a grasp of the Hebrew text minus many faulty assumptions yields an “eureka” illumination on Genesis 1. Most of us habitually look at controversial material through a prism of settled pre-conception which colors our conclusions no matter which angle we examine. Thus the prism becomes a prison. Invisible chains prevent movement and paralyze the mind. Hopefully, the next chapters will help to release us from being prisoners of dogma into clear enlightenment.

At this point some will question my conclusions on the basis of linguistic credentials. Please turn to Northrup in Appendix “G” if that is a problem (sample below). Northrup is an expert with years of teaching experience in Hebrew and Semitic languages. Also see Appendix “E” “Language Challenge for Hebrew Students.”

Apparently the phrase “...and the stars” (v16d) is the direct object of the infinitive in the phrase: “And God made two great lights...and the stars,” ... most translations obscure this relationship of the phrase...it is easy to reach the additional illogical conclusion that stars were created in the fourth day...

...To postulate a temporary light source to produce the (first three) solar days produces a remarkably imaginative scenario that is totally unsupported by Scripture. Such an unsupportable postulate always suggests that an error is being propounded to clear up another error.

From Dr. Bernard Northrup - Please see Appendix “G”

*The lead hunter explains, "No, Jack,
with Mt. McKinley lining up with
the broken tree on the hillside
we must go left."*

CHAPTER 4

BIBLICAL COSMOGONY A PARAPHRASE AND COMMENTARY

Before reading the paraphrase which follows, it would be desirable to read from more than one standard translation (and including mine on page 98A) Genesis 1:1-20, Exodus 20:8-11 and Job 38:1-11. Picture yourself observing from an “on the surface of the planet” point of view. Make it a slow, prayer-bathed, phrase-by-phrase meditation. Look for simplicity, and check the critical word meanings with the dictionary aids in the appendix or with your own sources. Avoid interpretations that are predicated on English translations only. When interpretation becomes critical, take into consideration the latitudes and limits of the original Hebrew words. To do this carefully will be worthwhile for the reader.

The following paraphrase illustrates the interpretive position of this book. As you compare it with the corresponding biblical text, remember that a paraphrase does not merely translate, but may embellish the text with interpretation.

PARAPHRASE: In the beginning, first of all, God created the universe, the galaxies, sun, moon and stars, all blazing with light. He also created the planet earth, leaving it unfurnished, barren and empty, without life or dry land. Nothing but ocean covered the entire planet and that ocean was shrouded in darkness from a dense water-cloud that enveloped it like a blanket. The earth was not chaotic but only barren and uninhabited with a desert of universal ocean. The Spirit of God continues hovering (like a brooding

bird in the dormancy of night) over the darkened ocean waters for an undefined time.

Then God said, “Let there be light,” and diffuse light from the sun penetrated to the ocean for the first time. And God saw the light that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light “day,” and the darkness He called “night.” There was a literal, normal evening, and there was a literal, normal morning. This was day one: a solar day.

Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in between the waters and let it divide the water-cloud blanket above the ocean from the oceanic waters below.” And God made the expanse (the atmosphere or air) and divided the waters that were under the expanse from the waters that were above the expanse, and it was so. And God called the expanse “air.” There was evening and morning, day two.

Then God said, “Let the oceanic waters be gathered together in one place and let the dry ground appear,” and it was so. And God called the dry ground “land,” and the gathering together of the oceanic waters He called “seas.” Then God said, “Let the land bring forth grass, herbs and trees ...” God saw that it was good—day three.

Then God said, “Let visible lamps in the expanse of sky be for dividing the day from the night; and let them serve as signals for seasons and for days and for years. And let them be lamps in the expanse of sky to give light upon the earth,” and it was so. And God brought forth two great lamps; the greater lamp to dominate the day and the lesser lamp to dominate the night. He brought forth the stars also. And God gave them forth in the atmosphere of heaven to give light upon the earth. It was all good ... day four.

(Days five and six are not critical to the issue, so we move on to the scripture most used as proof text.)

Exodus 20: 8-11. “Remember the rest day to keep it set apart. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh is the rest of Yahweh your God. In it you shall not do any work, ... for six days Yahweh worked on the atmospheric heaven, the continental earth, the oceanic sea and every creature that is in them and rested the seventh day. So Yahweh blessed the rest day and set it apart.

That is a paraphrase, now on to more detailed exegesis.

GENESIS 1:1 IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

Undefined in time, God created (*bara*) all the stellar heavens, the galaxies and the planet earth out of nothing. It was perfect, though incomplete but *not chaotic*. The text does not promote “big

bang,” neither does it deny it. It does not say “watery matrix,” and it does not say “black hole-white hole.” There are no indicators regarding the physics of creation. It does not say that heavens and earth were created simultaneously. The language proclaims its message plainly and simply without defining any date of origin.

“Heavens” does not mean a space-time continuum in Scripture, but sun, moon and stars, as Psalms 8 and 19 define. It is doubtful that David was contemplating a space-time continuum (a 20th century theory of physicists) in Psalm 8, but when he says, “When I consider the *heavens*, the moon and the stars which you have ordained,” he certainly had the stellar heavens primarily in mind. Nowhere in the Bible is heaven construed as “space.” It refers either to celestial bodies or the air. Since air was not created until day two, it can only mean sun, moon and stars in verse one.

Earth in Scripture is not the “basic material elements” (8,p50) nor a “formless undefined region of water at the center of the deep” (6,p32). It never has meant that and it never will. Earth in Scripture usually means the land formations (including fields and wilderness) or the planet itself—never anything abstract. But in the first verse of the Bible, “earth” means the planet, for it clearly says that the earth had no visible land formations nor any living thing anywhere. There is no support from the Bible for a verse 1 creation of elementary particles (or water only) because the text says “heavens” and it says “earth” and any Hebrew of Moses’ day knew of at least two contextually distinguishable meanings for each of those two commonly used words. (These definitions may be found in the references of appendix D, or any standard lexicon.)

How glorious that must have been! Imagine the whole universe filled with light, stars, and galaxies! Picture an endless variety of astounding, cosmic novelties, and consider the sheer magnitude of that *ex nihilo* instant creation with its continuing development seen even today! We can only bow and worship with bated breath.

NOW THE EARTH WAS DESERTED AND EMPTY AND DARKNESS WAS ON THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN**

The planet was featureless and void, desolate and waste, barren and empty, a sterile desert of ocean similar to the world during the chapter-seven Flood, when no land could be seen anywhere. Moses does not use this phrase in the Flood chapter, but the Flood of Noah provides a good illustration of a deserted and desolate condition, since the flooded planet most certainly became barren and empty, or deserted and desolate, although far from sterile. Isaiah 45:18 is used by gap theorists (who postulate a creation between verse one

** Waw disjunctive does not allow a gap between verse one and verse two (hence, “Now”) but waw consecutive allows time between verses 2 and 3 (hence “then”). See Appendix “E,” Language Challenge for Hebrew Students.

universe was filled with light. When scripture states, “Darkness was on the surface of the ocean,” *it limits the zone of darkness* to that place. The Bible was written for men, not for angels, so the observer is located on the earth’s surface where man lives, the only logical reference point—the only sensible reference point. Joel 2:30 refers to “blood, fire and vapors of smoke—the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall be turned to blood.” We reasonably accept Joel’s frame of reference to be from the earth’s surface. The phenomena are caused by fearsome pollutants in earth’s atmosphere rather than a moon literally turned into blood. Therefore, “Let there be light” on day one and “God ‘brought forth’ two great lights—the stars also” for signals and season determination, (day four) picture the local “from-the-earth” perspective like the Joel passage and like God views constellations in the Job passage.

The universe radiated its enormous energy as soon as God created the heavens in verse 1, but the surface of the earth, where man would live (and where observations must originate), lay in total darkness under a thick cloud according to verses 2 and 6 as well as Job 38 where God Himself describes the conditions.

No “clouds of thick darkness” would be mentioned in Job and Genesis unless light existed elsewhere and was being obstructed. If the “swaddling band” and “garment” surrounding the earth produced darkness on the ocean surface, there must have been light for that “cloud” to obstruct. The heavens were blazing with light as soon as God spoke them into existence. Light necessarily accompanies massive gravitational bodies as an inevitable matter of physics,** but the zone of observation, where man would live, remained impenetrably dark until God spoke on that first day.

Ancient swaddling clothes and surrounding garment are pictured at the end of this chapter. They illustrate the opaque blanket which surrounded our newly born earth, causing total darkness on the surface of the ocean. This metaphor, in the oldest human literature, performs the incidental function of giving added support for the earth’s sphericity as we accept it today.

Cosmogonies which omit this interpretive key, a key which even predates Genesis, cannot fail to be flawed. How could it not be so? To omit Job 38:9 in a cosmogony is like omitting Genesis 1:1 and one must wonder how the widely accepted interpretations, being so deprived of complete data, can possibly be reliable. The truth is they cannot.

The writer of Hebrews reasons that when Jeremiah referred to a New Covenant there had been, by implication, an Old Covenant. In the same way a blanket of thick darkness over the ocean implies the existence of light. Otherwise that blanket, “the waters that were above,” could not function to darken anything.

** Black holes excepted.

and verse two) to prove that the world became chaotic. “He created it not waste and empty. He created it to be inhabited.” But this is better understood, “He did not create it *to be* empty, but formed it *to be* inhabited,” (NIV) which leaves no such implication.

Jeremiah uses the terms “without form and void,” or “waste and desolate,” or “barren and empty” (Jeremiah 4:23-27) in a description of Judah which pictures a discrete planet with mountains and hills trembling, not a fluidic chaos. As Jeremiah illustrates, it is better to use commonplace definitions for plain words, instead of abstractions which have no clear meaning and which lend themselves to widely variable constructions.

To accept a “fluidic chaos” interpretation leaves the Bible with no record of the creation of the solid planet earth at all. In an inspired record of beginnings, this seems impossible. The important phrase, “*tohu wabohu*” has been established at the close of chapter one to mean “barren and empty” or “deserted and empty” or similar renditions. Evicted from consideration are the very common renditions, “formless,” “unformed,” or “without form,” because a fully formed planet is established by the subtraction method—an ocean covered, full fledged planet. The planet was “empty” of life. Later God commanded *living things* to “fill” the land and waters.

It is not stated *when* the heavens and earth were created and up to this point there has been no identification of their creation with day one. That has been an incorrect assumption by many (that heaven and earth were created as part of day one) but that idea is ill founded and incorrect.

Genesis 1:2 and Job 38 give a plain description of the created planet earth, perhaps mega-years old (but without any “days” in its history), ocean-covered and blanketed with a thick, darkness-producing cloud. Then, “The Spirit of God continues brooding (a present continuous action) upon the ocean surface.” That statement brings us out of the past to the first command of light upon the ocean surface.

The word of God specifies only one place of darkness—the surface of the ocean. Job 38, a primary creation passage like Genesis, confirms, “When I (God) laid the foundation of the earth ... I made clouds the garment (over the sea) and thick darkness its swaddling band.” It was pitch black on the surface of that ocean where man would later live. Neither Job nor Genesis says thick darkness extended throughout space—just that it enveloped the earth’s ocean.

The record could easily have said, “Darkness permeated all things,” but it precisely and specifically limits darkness to the ocean surface. The swaddling band and covering garment portray *earth at its birth*, with a garment of clouds wrapped around it, thus producing darkness below impenetrable clouds. Hence, the rest of the

Isaiah 5:30 gives the full implication: “In that day ... if one looks at the land he will see darkness and distress. Even the light will be darkened by the clouds.” Then God Himself says, “I made the clouds its garment and wrapped [the earth] in thick darkness,” which clearly implies the existence of light elsewhere. (Also see Psalm 18:11 “thick clouds dark with water” a highly figurative passage but significant to our point.)

The expression “face of the deep” (verse 2) is used in Job 38:30 to describe an ice-covered ocean, “the ice, and the hoary frost of heaven ... the waters are congealed like stone and the *face of the deep* is frozen.” This should assure us that Genesis 1:2 “the face of the deep” means simply and literally the surface of the ocean.

So far, we have established the stellar heavens and an impenetrable cloud cover over an ocean-covered planetary base with no visible land formations anywhere. The planet continued “barren, waste and dark,” and may have been that way for multiple ages before a first day took place. The Bible does not specify when the “beginning” took place, nor how great a span of time might have been covered by that beginning. However, Proverbs talks about a “beginning ... before the world began” (8:23 NIV). If a “beginning” can be noted even before the foundation of the earth, then certainly a beginning existed before the first day of that earth.

AND THE SPIRIT OF GOD WAS BROODING* OVER THE WATERS**

The word “brood” expresses patience with an intriguing metaphor. The dictionaries offer “relax,” “move lightly,” “hover,” “flutter,” and “brood.” All seem to picture the parent bird over her family with gentle motions of brooding. Mother hen, patiently hovering over her young, beautifully pictures the Spirit of God patiently waiting before the command is issued for light to penetrate the “thick darkness.”

As the mother bird shelters her brood all night long, almost motionless and with unbelievable patience, so the Spirit of God, over the dark ocean surface, “is relaxing or brooding” (a surprising particle in such a context using a present continuous action). Then God commanded light to pierce the darkness. Time poses no problem for God, whether long or short as we perceive it. It is of no consequence with Him, for He transcends both time and matter. So He “hovers, flutters, broods, gently moves” (*rachaph*) over the ocean night, possibly for extended ages. This view captures a rich and full imagery, better exploiting the verbal form “is brooding”.

Every reader would profit from witnessing twenty one days of incubation for hatching chicks (eighty days for the albatross). Some mysterious force compels the mother bird to remain at the

nest with only the briefest breaks for food, water, and egg rotation. When the brood hatches, her faithful hovering over the clutch at night provides an appropriate picture of God's waiting over the created heavens and benighted earth. Then light pierced the darkness at God's command. Perhaps Cosmogony 101 should require periodic checks by the student during forty days and nights of the life of a brood, just to dramatize the depiction of patient waiting by "rachaph" in verse two.

Better yet, imagine people assembling in a stadium for forty days and forty nights to observe a centrally located brooding hen both before and after hatching. The point would certainly be made, because the observers' patience would be exhausted long before mother bird's. The brooding metaphor also confirms that the creation of the cosmos is separate from the first day that dawned over the ocean. The events of stellar creation must be separated from the first day. This can be done easily from the text even without the brood metaphor, but the "brood" or "hover" image confirms that conclusion.

Feathered creatures are easily frightened, even with a mere wave of the hand, when they are not in a brooding mode. However, once the matron sits on the nest, hormone loaded for hatching duties, she is an altogether different bird, not about to move, and her sharp beak enforces that objective. In total darkness, as described here, she is virtually motionless except for gentle flutterings. Night-time brooding is sheer waiting. This is a striking metaphor.

The Emperor penguins of Antarctica incubate their eggs when thousands of males, all jammed together, fast for about 110 days. They balance a single egg on their feet over the long winter night, becoming somewhat torpid, like hibernating bears and "not a lot goes on" (Nature 385:304-305, January 23, 1997). A falconer who trains birds for hunting calms his bird down during the daytime by slipping a hood over its head. An active bird suddenly becomes docile and quiet. These are further indicators of deliberate time delay while the Spirit of God broods or hovers over a darkened ocean before beginning to construct the biosphere.

Is there more? What about the reference to creation of life? Perhaps that is within the brood metaphor also, and if so, should limit our focus to activities that were preparing the planet for life, with the view exclusively local—from man's residence, the biosphere.

DAY ONE: THEN GOD SAID, LET THERE BE LIGHT ... AND GOD DIVIDED THE LIGHT FROM THE DARKNESS**

Day one begins the work of conditioning a deserted and

** For a discussion of the *waw disjunctive* versus *waw consecutive* as used here, see Appendix "E," Language Challenge for Hebrew Students.

empty planet for life. Each new day contributes directly to a habitation for man and all biological life. So, about 6,000 or perhaps 7,500 years ago, God finally commanded the light to shine out of darkness and He divided the light from the darkness, giving them names of “day” and “night.” Light was *not* created on this first day. No, no, no. Light coexists with matter and has been beaming throughout the universe since the beginning creative fiat.

But light is the primary need for a habitable biosphere. *Beginning with the first day*, the biblical text focuses on the local biosphere, the abode for man, created less than 8000 years ago. A rotating planet existed and a light source of fixed orientation created day and night. We call that light source the sun, a part of the “heavens” whose light became diffusely visible for the first time on earth. What a breathtaking glory is pictured for us when age-long total darkness on the ocean is overcome by pure light!

The sun was not visible as a discrete body because the atmosphere had not yet become fully transparent, but one can imagine that gentle, life-sustaining glory. The light was good. Evening and morning are initiated—the first “day” that the ocean surface had ever experienced, probably a period close to our present twenty four hours. It matters nothing if the earth had clocked millions of rotations under the blaze of the sun’s glory. There would not have been one “day” at the place of man’s abode if, as Job and Genesis tell us, no light had penetrated to the observation zone.

Those who believe that the “earth” means a “formless watery dispersion,” (8,p54; 6,p32) must ask themselves what the light shone upon to create an evening and a morning, day and night. One exponent asserts that this light came from God, as mentioned in Revelation 21, “The Lamb is the light of the city.” Did God simply switch Himself first on and then off, shining on the elementary particles throughout the universe? Another exponent says that the light came from God, but a swirling mass of watery material which would later become the earth gave night and day (6,p33,34). These mind boggling ideas exceed the meaning in the text. The question remains, what did the light shine upon to give night and day if not a completed, although unfurnished, earth?

The apostle Paul uses this day-one entrance of light onto the darkened earth to illustrate what happens at the regeneration of the individual believer. “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (II Corinthians 4:6). He likens the earth to darkened, unregenerate man with an opaque blanket veiling his mind and repelling God’s abundant light. What implications does Paul’s comparison have for the age of the universe?

At regeneration, as multitudes of believers testify, that veil is removed, light enters and God becomes an obvious reality. Because “God is light and in Him is no darkness at all” (I John 1) and “He wraps Himself in light as with a garment” (Psalm 104) Paul’s quotation strengthens the concept that the universe was filled with light at creation. The sun shone in its brilliance upon an opaque earth until God commanded light to penetrate the blanket of darkness but as we have seen, the atmosphere was not instantly brought to total transparency. Perhaps God waited until day four for that because He wanted to illustrate progressive illumination which is the experience of every regenerate person. Hence the cloud of thick darkness was partially lifted on day one but cleared on day four.

Possibly, each day of creation contributes to this picture of salvation. The inflation of the atmosphere on day two can be compared to the infilling with the Holy Spirit and prayer. Then comes the foundation of fruitfulness (comparable to day three) and testimony (day four) as Jesus becomes, more vividly, the “light of the world.”

The moon represents the waxing, waning corporate testimony of the body of believers reflecting the sun’s rays. The stars portray the individual lights of believers: “In the midst of a crooked and perverse generation among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life” (Philippians 2:15,16). God may have chosen to leave the atmosphere somewhat obscured on days one through three in order to illustrate the progressive enlightenment of the newly regenerated believer. Genesis 1 presents us with an underlying picture, culminating in God’s purpose for man. God made man after His own image—which is the purpose of the creation of Adam as well as the purpose of the regeneration of fallen and darkened man.

The point is worth repeating. Just as certainly as “no darkness at all” exists in God, so the universe is full of abundant light since its beginning. Though that light was repelled for a time by the opaque blanket over earth (just as we blinded sinners have repelled the truth of God), that light existed in the universe from its beginning. At the command of God, the light finally penetrated to the earth’s surface, illustrating spiritual illumination. The first-day illustration, as used by the apostle Paul, supports our thesis. Day one begins the transformation of a deserted and barren ocean world into a fruitful habitat for man, just as regeneration creates spiritual life in a darkened and barren life. The focus of each and every day of the six-day work, including day four, is preparation of the planet’s long-benighted surface for biological life and typifies the regeneration of a believer.

No, this is not dogmatic theology working with types and

shadows but it is just another indicator on a long list to encourage acceptance of a day four unveiling of the sun and stars, rather than their creation. Extended time duration before day one is also strengthened by the Pauline example.

DAY TWO: THEN GOD SAID, LET THERE BE AN EXPANSE BETWEEN THE WATERS AND LET IT DIVIDE THE WATERS FROM THE WATERS (Genesis 1:6)

The expanse (atmosphere) was inflated between the cloud-cover waters and the ocean-surface waters. The atmospheric gases now filled the world, a perfect medium for the sustenance of biological forms planned for the next four days. We have evening and morning, day two.

It is possible that the “waters that were above” before the Deluge represent much higher quantities of water than are presently in the atmosphere. Many creationists have postulated a canopy of water or mist held in suspension by other mechanisms than the present regime. We cannot be certain of that but it is certain that huge quantities of water exist today suspended in the air, dramatically illustrated in the hurricanes followed by widespread flooding. All the rivers of the world today are fed from the “waters that are above” with enormous quantities of water replenished each and every day.

The Bible clearly states that “The LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth” (Genesis 2:5). That condition may have continued until the Flood. Mists or streams issued from the earth to water the whole face of the ground. The rainbow of chapter nine is pictured as a new physical phenomenon after the Flood. Conditions may have been so benign that buildings were unnecessary. Jesus does not refer to building programs in Noah’s day but He does refer to building programs in Lot’s post-Flood time, indicating the need for shelter (Luke 17:26ff). Was the pre-Flood world a universal terrarium, semitropical and without rain? The pre-Flood and post-Flood weather regimes may have been quite different, but in both cases waters prevail “above.”

The system could be as simple as the water mist above, the ocean beneath, and the atmosphere in between, similar to what we have today, although it appears to have changed somewhat after the cataclysm. In any case, God speaks about making the expanse on day two, meaning the air or atmosphere—the firmament called heaven, where birds fly. “Let birds fly above the earth across the open “expanse” of air” (Genesis 1:20). The expanse is the air. The only place where birds have ever flown or will ever fly is the air—plain old air. Birds fly through it, over it, across it, above it, on it, in it and no place else. Some literalize the Hebrew expression in verse

20 as birds fly “on the face of the expanse of the heavens” (6, p60). But the Hebrew *paniyim* is still another word with an enormous range of meanings so, again, context must determine. The KJV has it right, “Let birds fly over the earth in the *open* expanse of heaven.” The identical expression is used when birds were released “in the open field.” Some could, perhaps, translate it “in the face of the field” but the idea is the wide-open spaces of the field like the wide-open spaces of the air.

Note that those who hold a “vast firmament” interpretation (for the day-two context), involving the entire solar system or beyond, to the end of space, have no record of the air being produced at all. Again, this would be an inconceivable omission in an inspired account describing the biospheric home of man. Light is recorded, the sea, land formations, vegetation, animals and man; but no air? More sensibly, the firmament or heaven (*raqiya*) in the Genesis 1 context is the atmosphere, the expandable and compressible air. “Let birds fly above the earth across the open *expanse* of air.”

Some biblical contexts use the firmament to indicate the abode of God, but that is not at all the view of Genesis 1. Possibly, some uses of “firmament” or “expanse” in the Bible refer to the atmosphere *plus* the starry hosts, because the ancients as observers did not distinguish clearly. But in the day-two and day five contexts, the language refers to the atmosphere where birds fly.

The vast firmament concept for day two requires the existence of a spherical shell of water at the outermost boundary of the universe. As we enter century 21, the outer boundary of space is not even inspectable. No one knows if such a water mass exists now (or ever existed) and much uncertainty dominates talk about objects or conditions at those limits of observation. We may be observing only one tenth of the extent of the universe.

God specifically defines readily understandable items like day, night, earth, and sea—all familiar furnishings for the biosphere’s function. Would He define the firmament in a manner incomprehensible to the minds of men and leave out the origin of the atmosphere entirely? The firmament called “heaven” on day two, is the air. The atmosphere, even today, holds billions of tons of water in suspension in addition to the visible clouds. Because air is so essential to life, God gave a record of its origin on day two. It can be stated categorically that any interpretation which leaves the biosphere without any air created to keep the biota living is simply and conclusively wrong. Defined by men, mistakes could be expected but defined by God *raqiya* is the expanse of air where birds fly.

All the items specifically named by God on days one, two, and three—that is, day, night, expanse, air, land, and sea are described as though one were observing them from man’s home on

the surface.

DAY THREE: THEN GOD SAID, LET THE WATERS UNDER THE EXPANSE BE GATHERED TOGETHER IN ONE PLACE AND LET THE DRY LAND APPEAR (Genesis 1:9)

God created the land, not on day three, but at verse 1. Although submerged, perhaps for ages, the land appeared on day three as a result of the “gathering together of the waters” into a “sea” which simply means a bowl-shaped container. Perhaps, before day three, the ocean was fairly uniform in depth. On day three it was deepened in the basin areas to allow land to appear with only low mountains or hills. High mountain ranges originated later, as a consequence of the Flood cataclysm (Psalm 104:5-8 ASV).

When Jonah says God “made” (*asah*) the dry land, he means what we read here. God made it to appear, made it visible (Jonah 1:9). The land had been submerged, totally wet; then it was made to “appear” by the gathering together of the water into a sea and then it was dried. That is how God “made” the dry land (like He would “make” two great lights on day four). Then God said, “Let the earth (the dry land earth) bring forth grass, herbs, and trees.” It was all good, on this evening and morning of the third day.

Thus life and land replaced the uninhabited and barren ocean. These day-three events will help us understand day four. If God can “make” the dry land by way of rearrangement, He can also “make” the stars on day four by a similar atmospheric rearrangement.**

DAY FOUR: THEN GOD SAID, LET LUMINARIES IN THE EXPANSE OF THE SKY BE FOR SEPARATING THE DAY FROM THE NIGHT. AND LET THEM SERVE AS SIGNALS* TO MARK SEASONS AND DAYS AND YEARS. (Genesis 1:14)**

On an overcast day we say, “No sun in the sky today.” Or, as it emerges from the clouds, we say, “Here comes the sun.” No one believes the sun ceases to exist in the solar system when it is merely obscured by clouds. We look at the sun as observers from below. When the sun emerges from behind the clouds, it is then “given forth” (*nathan-KJV, NIV “set”*) *in* the air. When the atmosphere is clouded, the luminaries of heaven are not “given forth.” In the same way, God “gave forth” (*nathan*) the luminaries (*me’orot*) sun, moon and stars in the air.

God “brought forth” or “worked” or “did” or “arranged” (*asah*) two great lights and the stars.** And He “set” or “placed” or “gave forth” (*nathan*) these lights *in* the expanse of heaven just like He “set” the rainbow in the heaven after the Flood (same ** Just as “end of the world” is misleading and is better translated, “end of the age” so “God made” can be misleading in this context. Better is “God brought forth” or “did” or “worked” or “arranged.” “Made” is acceptable with a caveat.

word—*nathan*). The dictionaries suggest *set*, *placed*, *appointed*, *put forth*, or *given forth* for this verb.

Rainbows are produced by refraction of light from raindrops, and can help us understand how God “set the stars in the firmament.” He did not pick up a star and mount it in the air, but made it visible as a rainbow is “set” or “placed” or “given forth” in the air (Genesis 9:13). The light that makes rainbows originates from 93 million miles away, then arrives in the atmosphere and is “given forth” (*nathan*). The greater light of verse 16 also originates from 93 million miles away, arrives and is “given forth.” It is a luminary *in the same way*, visible in the atmosphere to an observer on earth like the rainbow, originating from a great distance.

Obviously, if the atmosphere was clouded, making the sun invisible, it could not be said that the greater luminary was “given forth” in the atmosphere. Even though the light itself was present from the first day, the lamp which produced the light had not been “given forth” until the atmosphere became transparent. Only three days earlier, the planet was in *total darkness* covered by a dense cloud. Must we insist that God make everything transparent in the first 24 hours? Was God forced by a “clear sky law” to expel the thick darkness in one day? No, creation miracles did it in 72 hours.

Suppose God had left our world translucent with daylight and night only, but continually in a heavy overcast. Could it be said that sun, moon and stars were “brought forth” (*asah-KJV* “made”) or “given forth” (*nathan-KJV* “set”) in the air? Not at all to an earthbound observer.** Anyone describing the features of day four would use *identical language* whether those features were created on day four or simply unveiled then. Think about that.

Without visible luminaries, there would have been no method of marking seasons; hence day four contributes further to preparing the biosphere for man. Without visible celestial bodies, every community would have used a different frame of reference. North, as an absolute, and seasonal recognition would be meaningless. Once again, the focus is on the biosphere, not celestial creation. We need seasonal and directional markers. The fourth day accomplishes that: “Let there be a clock and let there be a north star.” Day four deals only with the visibility of markers.

Even migratory birds and sea creatures need the celestial markers for navigation. Those astounding, pre-programmed navigation systems largely depend upon “signs, seasons, days and years” obtained from the sky. Vegetable life needs light but no visible light

**Joel 2:30 refers to “blood, fire and vapors of smoke—the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall be turned to blood.” We reasonably accept Joel’s viewing perspective to be from the earth’s surface. The phenomena are caused by fearsome changes in earth’s atmosphere rather than a moon literally turned into a red liquid. Therefore, “Let there be light” on day one and “God ‘did’ two great lights—the stars also” for signals and season determination, (day four) is the local “from-the-earth” perspective like the Joel passage.

sources, hence it is created on day three. But birds and man need the light sources for orientation hence birds are created after the light sources became visible for navigational “imprinting.” It takes light 4.3 years to reach earth from the nearest star. Assuming normal light travel, after several years Adam and birds could see only three or four stars, if created on day four, which is unreasonable. Today we could see less than 8000 light years into the heavens.

Day four contributes to the construction of the biosphere as a home for man and other life forms. All of the work of all six days is post-planetary and post-stellar. How was “Let there be light” accomplished on day one when the earth had been shrouded in darkness by a dense cloud? God simply did something to the dense cloud to allow diffuse light penetration. How is “Let there be a clock” accomplished? By clearing away more of that cloud to allow the luminaries to become visible. Necessarily, God must clear the thick cloud before day one can have light. Not necessarily must He clear it completely in a single day. Acts 27:20 reads, “Now when neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest beat upon us, all hope that we would be saved was finally given up.” The conditions on day one were similar, and there is no escaping the need to clear the now translucent “cloud of thick darkness” to transparency before stars can be “brought forth” to view.

We can easily demonstrate that those luminaries are indeed given forth in the air. Psalm 19 exclaims, “The heavens declare the glory of God and the expanse shows his handiwork.” The atmosphere, as of day four, provides a window showcase of God’s glory. If the showcase is heavily clouded, the light is given forth but the light sources are hidden. When the skies clear, the light sources as well as the light itself are given forth in the atmosphere.

Why does God repeat the division of day from night here when that was accomplished on day one? It shows plainly that the day one “division” was incomplete and partial. Otherwise no purpose could be served by a new reference to dividing day from night.

AND LET THEM BE LUMINARIES IN THE EXPANSE OF AIR TO GIVE LIGHT UPON THE EARTH, AND IT WAS SO. GOD BROUGHT FORTH* TWO GREAT LUMINARIES—THE GREATER LUMINARY TO DOMINATE*** THE DAY AND THE LESSER LUMINARY TO DOMINATE*** THE NIGHT— THE STARS ALSO. GOD GAVE THEM FORTH IN THE EXPANSE OF AIR. (Genesis 1:15-17)**

The stars, created in verse one along with the sun, moon and earth, form part of the heavens; but the blanket of thick darkness obscured them from the earth. God partially lifted this obscur-

*** Throughout this book *** means author’s preferred word selection not found in the nine referenced versions. (See page 24-25)

ing cloud on day one, but made it entirely transparent on day four—as simple as that. Even today, we experience days when we cannot locate the sun visually, so this interpretation is easily credible. Just as the universal ocean obscured the dry land until the land “appeared” on day three, so the heavenly bodies were obscured by the “waters that were above” until that fog, or whatever it may have been, dissipated on day four. Just as God “made” the dry land by rearrangement, so God “made” two great lights—not universe-wide activity, but work within the local focus of the biosphere, as in the other five days.

Perhaps the meaning would be clearer if we thought of “made” in the sense of making a bed. The components of the bed exist, but may not be suitably arranged or ordered properly for use. We talk about having a “hairdo”, or having hair “done” at the salon. These examples of “make” and “do,” in a transitive verb, clarify the Hebrew word as used here and in Exodus 20. God “did” the stars for us, He “made up” the stars, sun, and moon for display on day four (as we “do” hair), arranged for a beautiful display. Accordingly, *asah* can be translated “made” as long as the concept of creation *ex nihilo* is reserved for verse 1. Obviously, God provided the record of creation to enable us to visualize things that happened when no man lived to observe them.

The KJV renders *asah* as “brought forth,” (or “put forth” in other versions) when referring to plant growth or the blossoming of a tree. The night of day four witnessed the “blossoming” of the stars and the Milky Way as these glories pierced the clouds that were remaining from day one. He is asking us to visualize a glorious, magnificent display! “Brought forth” very appropriately translates the concept, enabling us to appreciate the glory of that final unveiling of the heavens. Similarly, when daylight came, God “brought forth” a plainly visible sun. This portrays what an observer from an earth’s-eye view would have seen, had a human witness been present. Excessive reliance on the English *made* has distorted the Hebrew meaning of *asah* and led to interpretive error.

If the passage read, “In the beginning God created the earth, then a temporary light to last for three days, and after that on the fourth day, the stellar heavens,” we could conclude from genealogies that our universe is young. But God did not say it that way.

No one would suggest the prophecy in Ezekiel 32:7 or Isaiah 13:10 involves obliteration of the sun and stars: “I will cover the heaven and make the stars thereof dark. I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark...” Why should it be unthinkable that similar atmospheric obstructions (to those of Messiah’s second coming) were present on days one to four? Joel 2:2 and Zephaniah 1:15 also

corroborate “clouds of thick darkness” at the second coming of Christ (at least locally). Seasonal markers will be temporarily hidden then, just like the conditions of days one to three.

This concept is not difficult to grasp or outrageous to reason whereas a day four assembly of the celestial bodies around an existing planet earth certainly stretches reason and is not supported in the text. God may have *made* nothing on day four in the common English sense of that word, but in the Hebrew sense of *asah*, the observer saw God work, accomplish, put into action, arrange, or produce two great lights and the stars. Those bodies were “put forth”—not created—on day four.

Misunderstanding of verse 16 (as though stars were “created” there) forces interpreters to contort the opening verses. Unique and special definitions of “heaven” and “earth” result which confuse the issue. We are told that “heavens” means space and “earth” means a formless, undefined region within the “deep,” or the basic constituents of matter** in clear violation of the first rule of hermeneutics (which is, “Take the normal and usual meaning of words unless compelling reasons suggest a rare meaning.”) Correct interpretation of verse 16 allows use of the plain Hebrew language in the opening verses, and then everything falls into place easily.

Let me repeat that whether created on day four or unveiled on day four, an observer on earth would not be able to tell the difference by observation. The description of events would be exactly the same. The implication from this is that the fourth day language cannot be used to force a fourth day universe, as often supposed, because *those exact Hebrew words can be employed to describe the unveiling of an already functioning universe just as well*. This should free readers to allow verse 1 to be the record of stellar creation as it plainly speaks and which relieves scientific difficulties.

EXODUS 20:8-11 REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY... SIX DAYS YOU MUST LABOR AND DO ALL YOUR WORK BUT THE SEVENTH IS THE SABBATH OF YAHWEH... FOR SIX DAYS YAHWEH WORKED ON* THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, THE SEA AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY.**

Some additional thoughts to the discussion of chapter three. The context of this passage is a precedent set by God, establishing the Sabbath for man. Implications regarding creation may only be considered secondarily. In Exodus 20:11 God describes exclusively activities following the original creation of the stellar heavens and the ocean-covered planet. He may have done nothing to the heaven of stars during the six days other than unveil them.

Multiple assurances support our conclusion that Exodus

** e.g. Humphreys (6 p32, 75 or Morris 8, p41)

20:11 does not refer to galaxies and the basic earth: the use of *asah* (*work, do, make*) rather than *bara* (*create*); the limits of the six day activity; and the specific definitions for “heavens” and “earth” made by God Himself *during those identified six days*.

Each of these factors favors the local biosphere concept.

God, in providing the seven-day example of work and rest, did not include the *ex nihilo* work of the heavens and earth in the example because man could never imitate anything *ex nihilo* in his weekly labor. God confined His work during the six days to “making” things out of preexisting material. Even the “creation” of man’s physical components did not come *ex nihilo*, but out of the dust of the earth already created in verse 1 (Genesis 2:7).

It would not be appropriate if God asked humans to emulate *ex nihilo* creation, when all we can do is “make” or arrange or work on or bring forth or produce or fashion from existing material in our six-day weekly duties. This confirms in principle an initial *ex nihilo* creation (not defined in date) which could *not* be a precedent for man, followed by six literal days of divine “work” which were intended as a precedent for man.

God did not do the six-day work in 6 milliseconds because he wanted to set a precedent in the context of man’s home—the biosphere, where man would live and work on a *daily* schedule. The work of creating the stars lies outside of that context. If there were no “days” on the earth for long ages, there certainly could be no “daily” example for man during those ages. Hence, God established the stellar creation prior to day one, placing it outside the view of the six-day precedent.

Any origins lessons of Exodus 20 rank secondary to the primary purpose of a Sabbath example. Therefore, it is supremely unwise to require a text like this one to bear the weight of a complete, unqualified cosmogony (the text in no way indicates a young universe, anyway). The Hebrew language was perfectly capable of expressing, “God created the entire cosmos (stars and earth) in six days,” had the Holy Spirit so chosen, but He did not.

Most of the biblical references to “heaven and earth” (when coupled together), refer to the stellar heavens and planet earth, although exceptions exist. When the words are not coupled, most references to “heavens”** refer to the atmosphere, and most references to “earth” refer to the dry land, but many refer to the stellar heavens and planet earth. Apparently, the Hebrew mind did not distinguish clearly between the heaven of stars and the heaven of atmosphere, just as one might imagine. To anyone uninformed about the nature of air limitation and star distances, there may be no clear distinction between stellar heavens and atmospheric heavens. However, we must clearly distinguish today, and we may expect an in-

** The Hebrew original always uses the plural form whether singular or plural is meant. Translations must be context driven.

spired record by God to confirm the facts as we know them today.

It is interesting that God would record the facts as they appeared to primitive generations in deference to their technological limitations, and at the same time maintain scientific accuracy throughout. One can imagine the serious intellectual hurdle presented to people in those days if God had said, "The solar system is heliocentric, man lives on a spherical planet with stars light years away." More important issues for man—moral and spiritual issues—required that God minimize the intellectual preoccupation which may have resulted from premature lessons in astronomy. As it is, nothing astronomical is in error, although astronomical structure does not occupy the central focus of Genesis.

The text refers to heavens, earth and sea. The sea is home to fish, whales, crabs, coral, and much more—a glorious creation! The earth houses gophers, deer, trees, cats, and on and on—a glorious creation—all created within the six days. The heaven contains birds, bees, bats, bugs, and on and on—a glorious creation—all created or made within the six days. Therefore, He says, "The heaven, the earth, the sea, *and all that is in them*," that is, the biosphere. Heaven and earth are clearly defined in this context as air and land, with no other proof necessary. But the inclusion of the word "sea" closes the matter, settles and seals it. Exodus 20 focuses on the six days only, because no "sea" existed until day three and the sea was not defined until then. Universe and sea do not fit in the same context but "air, land and sea" fit comfortably together. Note that all definitions are simple and familiar, night, day, land, sea and air.

We need not resort to far-out definitions to understand Exodus 20:11, nor do we need to force the plain language of the original text. These standard usages fit comfortably with the context.

Psalm 135:6 is worthy of note: "Whosoever the LORD pleased, that did He in heaven, and in the earth, in the sea and in all deep places." *Asah* is translated "did" here, a translation which would be preferred for Genesis 1:16, "And God did two great lights." But in Psalm 135:6 *asah* is rendered, "That *did* He in heaven, and in the earth and in the sea. He causes the vapors to ascend from the ends of the earth, He makes lightnings for the rain, He brings the wind out of His treasures." The verse 7 enlargement of verse 6 (a common Hebraistic practice) relates only to atmosphere, land, or ocean in a clear reference to heavens, earth and sea, the identical language of Exodus 20:11. How, then, can we reject the same suggestion for the language of Exodus? God Himself so employs Psalm 135. Psalm 146:5-6 yields the same reasoning as Exodus 20:11.

DR. NORTHRUP'S TRANSLATION

The word "in" has been deliberately omitted in the quota-

tion from Exodus 20:11 (For [in] six days...). The preposition does not appear in the text but has been supplied by translators. Dr. Bernard Northrup, an authority in Hebrew translation, first made us aware of the significance of this omission. It lends support to his preferred translation, "For six days the Eternal Lord worked on the heavens, the earth, the sea and all that is in them and rested on the seventh day." The Bible does not specify the creation of the stars, sun and moon to be "in" or within the six days. The preposition must be *thoroughly removed* from our thinking because it confuses the meaning. Translators may supply words at times but not here.

Dr. Northrup's translations of both Genesis and Exodus are essentially the same as offered here, and there is much similarity in interpretation. A serious look at his paper on fallacious axioms of creationists, given at the 1994 International Conference on Creation, is strongly recommended (5,pp397-405). Also, please see Appendix "G" for excerpts from Dr. Northrup.

TIME FOR ANGELIC CREATION

Surely, God was active before 8,000 years ago (or 900 trillion, for that matter, if such a date could be). Angels experience time as part of creation since the beginning (Daniel 10:13, Revelation 12:12) so when did He create them? When did God establish His throne in the heavens—just five days before He made Adam? If the universe began on the fourth day, and nothing existed before the first day, then how much time passed before Lucifer fell and at least 30 million angels fell with Lucifer? To assume a brief 48 hour existence is unreasonable. One would think that a significant act such as the creation of angels, if it took place *during* the six days, would surely be mentioned in the Genesis account of those days. To neglect mentioning this would be like writing a history of Israel without referring to Jacob's family.

The Bible calls angels "morning stars" in Job 38. They receive names after the stars, as if the glory of stars helps us to picture their service and character. However, the stars, according to the day four creation view, are not even made on day three. Thus, it would be impossible for the angels to be named after them! Does it seem likely that the Bible portrays them as stars on day three, "rejoicing at the foundation of earth," when stars can't exist for another day?

Ruin/reconstructionists, progressive creationists and theistic evolutionists all have a problem explaining the "very good" pronouncement after Adam's creation but that does not apply to the biosphere model which assumes a perfect world. Angels were created perfect as well, and whether they fell after day six (quite unlikely) or before day one, still all the creation in Genesis was "very

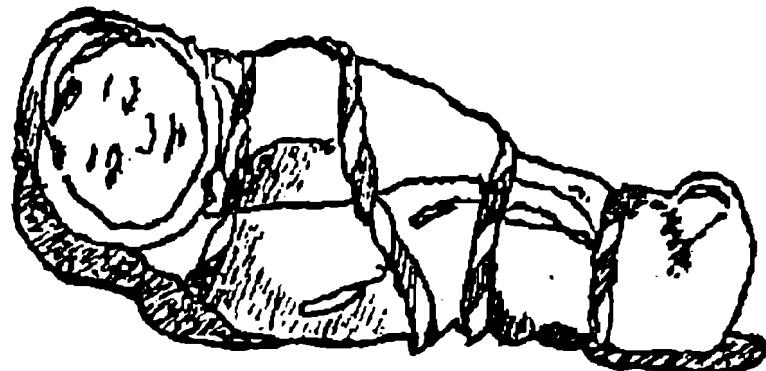
good." The pronouncement refers only to the six day work.

We must choose between stellar creation at verse 1 or verse 16. From the foregoing chapters, that choice should be easy. Verse 1 wins decisively and solves all the major problems. Unanswered problems exist but anti-creation arguments have proven so ephemeral that Bible believers have grown accustomed to vindication after better research. Eliminate a mandatory young universe and the creationist is left in the comfortable position where every fact of science blends with every word of Scripture and with no apologies for either.

Feathered creatures are easily frightened, even with a mere wave of the hand, when they are not in a brooding mode. However, once the matron sits on the nest, hormone loaded for hatching duties, she is an altogether different bird, not about to move, and her sharp beak enforces that objective. In total



darkness (as the ocean is described in Genesis 1:2) she is virtually motionless except for gentle flutterings. Nighttime brooding is sheer waiting. This is a striking metaphor. "And the Spirit of God is brooding over the waters." (Genesis 1:2)



**Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?...
I made clouds its garment and thick darkness its swaddling band... Job 38:4,9**

*Four out of five hunters elect left.
Jack follows for a hundred yards ...*

CHAPTER 5

CREATION PASSAGES ILLUSTRATED WITH KNOWN ASTRONOMICAL FEATURES

Several planets and many satellites in the solar system provide practical examples of the creation conditions specified in Genesis, Job, and Exodus. We will use these well-known features to illustrate the simplicity of the creation account—as depicted in these foundational books and represented in the present features of the solar system. Conditions in the solar system that closely match the description in Genesis one bring vivid clarity to this interpretation.

All of the planets and their satellites are “desolate and empty” today (except for the earth). Jupiter’s ice-covered satellites, Callisto and Europa, provide an example of our earth when it had a universal ocean with no land formations. Europa is deserted and empty, waste and desolate, barren and void at this very moment. If the surface were not frozen, it would be a featureless ocean just as on the primeval earth. Saturn’s Titan has an obscuring atmosphere similar to our earth’s before the first day. Titan, (although it does not possess total darkness as described on the earth) has never experienced a single unobscured day of light on its solid surface. Neglecting translucence, there never has been a “first day” for Titan!

The same goes for Venus whose atmosphere obscures visible light. Venus has never experienced a day with evening and morning. Barring divine intervention, Venus might continue millions of years without a first day. We should be able with no strain on reason to postulate an equal amount of time before earth’s first day.

Even if translucence allows considerable light penetration through those atmospheres, please allow them to illustrate the point. The atmospheres of Venus and Titan are made of sulfuric acid, carbon dioxide, methane, and other components—a far cry from the “waters that were above” which produced the total darkness on early earth, but they provide a full-scale illustration of primeval earth conditions.

SOLAR SYSTEM SAMPLES

Studying the solar system to help us understand the creative history described in the Bible is perfectly appropriate. The barren planets (minus their impact craters and destructive, post-creation events) resemble earth’s condition *before* the six-day work. The six day work merely made the existing earth biologically habitable. Let us create a composite of several of these features, a new planet, and name it “Compo.” To aid understanding of the Genesis creation, we will apply the language of Scripture to that hypothetical planet.

Visualize this planet about to be created. It will be the size of Venus, with a worldwide ocean like Europa, the temperature and rotation the same as earth, and with an opaque atmosphere deeper than that of Titan. All of these conditions more or less exist today in the solar system and should be easy to accept. The opaque atmosphere, according to Job, is some sort of dense cloud made of water. We have called this hypothetical planet Compo because it is a composite of various features found in the solar system. Thus the record can be represented:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and Compo. And Compo was barren and empty and darkness was on the surface of its ocean. And the Spirit of God was brooding over the waters.”

Notice that the heavens have been created and Compo also, but one place is singled out as being “dark,” the surface of Compo’s ocean. We discover from Genesis 1:6,7 and Job 38:9 that the ocean was “dark” because of a thick cloud wrapped around Compo, like the swaddling clothes and garment wrapped around a newborn babe.

Now add another feature to Compo which we also find in the solar system today. Let’s assume that the solar system is at least 6,000 years old and Venus has not experienced appreciable daylight on its surface in all of those years. Since Compo is a composite of existing conditions in the solar system, we can give Compo at least 6,000 years of time before we represent God as saying, “Let there be light on Compo,” (although light shone throughout the universe since the beginning). After all, Venus has not experienced unclouded daylight on its surface for at least that long, even though the sun has been shining all that time and our Compo has an even darker cloud than that surrounding Venus. The Spirit of God broods

over the waters for at least 6,000 years. Some think that the time length may have continued 900 million years or much more, but we defer for the moment, for the purpose of our illustration, to those who think young-earth.

The Holy Spirit has a plan. His plan is to wait. Like a brooding hen patiently waits and waits in the night. Why did the Spirit of God wait, and how long? In our illustration He broods only 6,000 years, but in reality it could have been millions of years. The reason He waited, after creating the galaxies, may have been so that Adam and we could see actual astronomical phenomena in progress. Supernova explosions, pulsars, quasars, colliding galaxies, and such are real, not virtual. God, *at no expense to His abundant patience*, simply waits, for the benefit of His credibility and our sense of reality. If God were wringing his hands, ho-hum, waiting for light to arrive, it would be a problem to suggest a deliberate time interval. But He does not—there is absolutely no difference for God to wait 12 billion years or one day—a billion years is nothing to a transcendent God.

To continue: After waiting at least 6,000 years, God *works on Compo*, to make a habitation for biological life, including man. He will take six days to make the biosphere. What is needed first to make a darkened, desolate, ocean waste into a biosphere? Yes! “Then God said, Let there be light.” He does something to the thick dark cloud to allow light through, but does not allow clear visibility of the sun, moon and stars. He simply separates light from darkness and gives them the names “Day and Night”—day one.

The next logical need would be air. Certainly, no life could thrive without air, so “Let there be an atmosphere (raqiya) in between the ocean water and the superdense blanket of clouds,—day two.” God gives this the name “heaven” or “air.” Clearly, this “heaven” is the atmosphere, as distinguished from the stellar heavens of verse 1. Raqiya, (air, expanse, firmament) like its close associate shamayim (heavens) has three meanings, air, stars or God’s place of abode and manifestation. Compo needs only air.

Next, man needs land and soil. Even the fish of the sea need a shoreline, so “Let the waters be gathered together in one place and let the dry land appear ... Let the earth (land) bring forth grass and trees—day three.” God gives these features the names of “land (or earth) and seas.” Notice that it is not called “Compo” (the planet) but land, the dry, continental land on Compo.

The need to be oriented in direction, to measure time, to mark off the seasons is more important than we might realize. Therefore, a merely translucent atmosphere will not do. The atmosphere must be transparent, so that actual light sources, the lamps, can be identified. Since the darkness was expressly caused by a thick cloud,

the light on day one appeared when that cloud barrier diminished. However, the light sources themselves were not yet “given forth.” They were prohibited from visibility in the atmosphere on days one to three. Day four experienced a more complete clearing, allowing the light sources themselves to be “given forth” in the atmosphere. “Let there be lights in the expanse of air … and God brought forth two great lamps … and gave them forth in the expanse of air—day four.” Days five and six complete the work on man’s home. It is a very good Compo.

None of the above concepts require torturing the brain for grasping, because we can see examples of each feature in the current solar system. A dense overcast on today’s earth can show us the light conditions of day one and when the overcast lifts we have day four demonstrated. The vagueness of specially defined words is gone. Every word of ordinary Hebrew is fully understandable, without twisting or forcing the language. The earth of Genesis 1:1 is a tangible planet like the planets of today. The six days represent work applied only to the biosphere making a habitation for man.

Let us take our Compo learning device into Exodus, the “proof text” of many creationists. “For six days Yahweh worked on the air, the dry land, and the sea and everything in them” Yes, we could translate it, “For six days Yahweh *worked on or prepared or did* the air, the land and the sea...” The meaning is the same, because in no way can we include the term “Compo” instead of dry land. He is speaking of the atmospheric heaven of day two and the dry land of day three and also the sea of day three. We could allow, “For six days Yahweh *made* the heavens, the earth, and the sea.” However, we must keep the meaning, heaven, earth, and sea as defined within the six day narration (air and land). “Made” must retain the sense of working on existing material. Different words are preferable, but “made” will do.

Thus, a hypothetical planet, made from existing components of the solar system, can provide convincing reason for a simple, literal interpretation of the Genesis narrative. *If there are literal conditions in the solar system which precisely match the language of Genesis 1:1 and 1:2, without resorting to special definitions and highly imaginative speculations, then those conditions provide a basis for the best interpretation.*

Our solar system displays literal conditions which closely match the preconditions on earth before the first day. If God would choose today to make Venus into a habitation for life, (after some changes like temperature, spin, orbit diameter, water and a moon), He could use the precise language of Genesis 1 to describe the making of His Venusian biosphere. Except for “brood,” which is a metaphor, the language makes perfect literal sense.

Hence the question: “When would you say was day one, with an evening and morning, for Venus in this scenario?” Day one would occur at least many thousands, and more likely many millions, of years after the formation of the planet Venus. The meaning is clear. The first day on earth could have taken place long after the formation of the planet, according to plain Bible language.

Henry Morris, who established a credible scientific basis for Flood geology, has contributed to the restoration of confidence in biblical literalism more than perhaps any other person in the 20th century. People were pleading symbolic language, figurative or allegorical language, analysis from an investigation into the “Hebrew mind” and other clever evasions of the simple words relating to the Flood and creation. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the early torchbearers in the restoration of biblical creationism and biblical literalism.

But in the interpretation of Genesis, Dr. Morris is forced to use special definitions and ambiguous interpretations of Genesis 1. “Heavens” is space, “earth” is atoms, “morning” is something extraordinary that no one has experienced, “the formless and void ‘deep’” is anyone’s guess.

As it turns out, the language of Genesis 1 sustains an even more literal interpretation than that of Dr. Morris. “Heavens” are the sun and stars as David defined them; “earth” is the planet we are all familiar with; “morning” is equally familiar. The “deep” is nothing more nor less than the ocean. Nothing is esoteric or difficult to understand. Verse 2 simply describes a barren planet like Europa or Venus. All major problems remaining to creation science are solved with the priceless added benefit of understanding the text literally. Some creationists may not realize it, but Flood geology would be greatly enhanced if they would leave the age of the universe and earth undefined.

Genesis Unbound, a book by Dr. John Sailhamer has some valuable insights about the age of the universe. He reads into the text the supposition that many animals and plants were created long before day one. To that we object strenuously and cannot fully recommend his book, but it is worthy of study for other contributions, notably his analysis of the Hebrew grammar.

Dr. Sailhamer claims, “... when God said, ‘Let there be an expanse,’ He was ‘making’ an expanse over the land, an expanse which had not been there before. As I argued previously, the Hebrew word ‘to make’ (Genesis 1:7) means ‘to set aright,’ ‘to fix,’ or ‘to set in order.’ ...Although the Hebrew verbal construction in verse 14 is significantly different from verse 6, our English translations don’t always reflect that difference. In the Hebrew text of verse 14, God does *not* say, ‘Let there be lights in the expanse to

separate the day and night...’ as if there were no lights before His command and afterward they came into being. Rather, according to the Hebrew text, God said, ‘Let the lights in the expanse be for separating the day and night...’” (26,p131 with notes 9 and 10 p254).

Dr. Sailhamer explains that verse 6 uses the verb *hyh* alone, “Let there *be* an expanse,” but verse 14 uses *hyh* with an infinitive, “Let the lights in the expanse *be for separating* day from night.”

These technical language details, from a highly qualified professor of Hebrew, show insights not available to ordinary readers. They give added support to our view as illustrated by the solar system. Stars were not created on day four, which leaves the age of the universe undefined in the Bible.

LITERAL GENESIS POSSIBLE AND PREFERRED

Many theologians affirm, “We do not read Genesis 1 literally.” Why? Simply because they will not question mainstream geology due to strong academic peer pressure. But in doing this, they seem to generate a great capacity for making plain and simple language into an obscure confusion of figurative poetry, metaphors and symbolism that can mean most anything anyone wants it to mean. I call it tampering with the word of God.

When the literal sense makes sense, and particularly when difficulties are dissolved, we may be encouraged that we have the correct interpretation. Lo, and behold, the Bible means what it says, exactly and precisely to the jot and tittle. The solar system bodies as we have seen make a literal Genesis very reasonable.

Numerous attempts to reconcile the mutually exclusive concepts of evolution and creation have been made, but a literal Genesis is immediately destroyed and a logical monstrosity is erected. Such an attempt at reconciliation is easy to abandon once the supposed evidence for biological evolution and long ages for geology is exposed as erroneous and in many ways fraudulent. The final obstacle for theistic evolutionists may be the age of the universe. As soon as a long age for stars is allowed, the last obstacle for the minds of many gap theorists and progressive creationists disappears. To those people we biosphere theorists say, “Welcome to biblical literalism and a coherent, believable Bible message which satisfies all the facts of science in the process.”

If setting up the universe were up to any one of us we would never create the earth first and then four days later create the galaxies. It is a preposterous way to do it like frying eggs before cracking the shells. God can do anything, but the Scripture does not claim such an inane sequence and neither should we. The solar system shows the reasonableness of a literal Genesis account by

providing real examples matching a literal reading of Genesis.

THE “PRIOR COMMITMENT” HAZARD

Many people have a vague feeling that the Bible is true and that evolution is also, somehow, true. They assume evolution has been derived from dependable science. It has not—not even close. Hear Richard Lewontin, Harvard biology professor and author of *Billions and Billions of Demons*:

“...we take the side of science in spite of the patent absurdity of some of its constructs, in spite of its failure to fulfill many of its extravagant promises of health and life, in spite of the tolerance of the scientific community for unsubstantiated just-so-stories, because we have a prior commitment, a commitment to materialism. It is not that the methods and institutions of science somehow compel us to accept a material explanation of the phenomenal world, but, on the contrary, that we are forced by our a priori adherence to material causes to create an apparatus of investigation and a set of concepts that produce material explanations, no matter how counterintuitive, no matter how mystifying to the uninitiated. Moreover, that materialism is an absolute, for we cannot allow a Divine Foot in the door...”

(From the New York Review, January 1997, p31)

Evolution has *not* been derived from dependable science—not even close. It is a hitch-hiker on good science and uses that name to authenticate one of the biggest deceits in the history of man. Occasionally, an honest evolutionist acknowledges its tenuous structure but tragically, most all of academe has been duped. While they profess intellectual and scientific certainty (in spite of the facts) they accept evolution, which is actually intellectually unsound and has zero science to support it. For proof see bibliographical references 15, 16, 28, and 49 to name a few.

After the Osama Bin Laden tape was broadcast, showing his involvement in the 9/11 airliner bomb attack, world response was predictable according to predisposed philosophies of the various factions. One commentator noted that a hard core of Muslim extremists would never be convinced regardless of the evidence because of their vested interest and hardened mindset. Even if Bin Laden personally went on Oprah or 60 Minutes confessing guilt, said one, they would call it rigged. These people had given their lives and some of them their fortunes promoting a particular doctrine and to persuade them otherwise proves to be impossible.

I cite Lewontin and the Moslem extremists to say this: How about us? Each of us needs to combat the universal human propensity which would rather have our entrenched dogma justified than to

solve the problem. None of us are free from the peril of generating “sacred cows” which dare not be questioned. But after careful, prayerful consideration of the foregoing, with preconceptions minimized and humility maximized, the choice should be easy.

The options are clear. Creationists can 1) hang on to the mandatory young-universe dogma and continue to wrestle, battered and bleeding, with the direct physical evidence of the speed of light and astronomical distances as well as some of the isotope dating difficulties, or 2) we can accept the biosphere model of Genesis 1 and relax with a young biosphere, catastrophic Flood geology, no serious difficulties and no threat to biblical creationism. It leaves the age of the universe undefined as the dimensions of the universe were left undefined which are certainly related concepts.

So why the reluctance to embrace this good news when all major problems are solved for creationists? Henry Morris tells of his church experience when a pastor warned him regarding his rejection of evolution. The pastor asked, “How can all those scientists be wrong?” But today the question is addressed to creationists who question the thesis of this book and who ask, “How can those esteemed leaders of creation science be wrong on this one point of the age of the universe?” It is a similar social phenomenon and they can, indeed, be wrong. It may be scary to change one’s interpretation of Genesis but once changed we enter an impregnable fortress. Refuse entrance and peril continues.

Some say, “Your interpretation is new. The church has never understood it this way,” My answer is “No, it is not new.” True, it has not been widely known and several sources supply only pieces of the whole, but consider. Would anyone guess the argument of *this chapter* before satellite exploration? Hardly. Similarly, would the early or medieval church concern themselves with galactic distances and the speed of light before Roemer measured it in 1676? I insist that one need not know the facts of astronomy to conclude the interpretation offered here. Job 38 was here from antiquity and all the arguments presented are valid for any time period. I have not concerned myself with the history of relevant interpretations but I will mention one very popular source among many which (only in part) supports my thesis. That is Halley’s Bible Handbook (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI 1962 pages 59-61). He states regarding the fourth day:

“On the “first day” (light from sun, moon and stars) must have penetrated the earth’s mists (1:3) while they themselves were not visible. But now, (on the fourth day) due to the lessening density of the clouds, ... they became visible on earth.”

Probably hidden away in some dusty volume is the entire thing in one piece, like scrolls found in pottery in an archaeology site.

*Jack's misgivings overpower him.
"You know, with evening approaching,
a wrong turn in this wilderness could,
literally, be a matter of life or death."*

CHAPTER 6

NEEDLESS OBSTACLES TO CREATION SCIENCE

Multitudes of sincerely interested people have been deflected from creation science by baseless assertions about the speed of light and isotope dating. Dogmatic young-earth contentions lead some detractors into skepticism. When men of high stature base their conclusions on weak premises, the scientific world turns off. Defensive books and lectures which attempt to support a young-universe concept produce a counterproductive creationist effort.

All things considered, there is no biblical basis and very little, as well as only questionable scientific basis to prove a young universe. Major scientific objections have been raised toward a young stellar creation. Semi-plausible attempts have been made to counter some of the objections, but none of these attempts produce explanations that influence well-informed groups. Young-universe creationists have alienated themselves and the creationist message from the mainstream sciences by this flawed "Bible" concept, causing many sincere people to head for liberal explanations.

1. SCIENTIFIC OBJECTIONS MAY BE PARTLY VALID

We can not fault any student (especially those reared in evolution doctrine) for questioning creationist explanations. If the universe is, in fact, old, teaching otherwise promotes a serious error and is an obstacle to the honest inquirer. Creationism will not advance freely as long as it supports factual error. Our work against

evolution is limping along and vulnerable because we have been promoting a dogma that can be defended neither biblically nor scientifically.

An inquiring, open-minded scientist or student who is ready to respond to the Good News, would be bewildered if told that the Bible plainly teaches a geocentric solar system. This well-worn illustration is appropriate here. The concept of an earth as the center of the universe presents an unnecessary obstacle to that person's mind. A repentant sinner of any intellectual background would, by the grace of God, reach out to the Savior in spite of intellectual difficulty, but why impose an unnecessary burden? If we insist on a young age for our planet without such specification given by God, we ask people to believe an idea which, in their minds, compares to a geocentric solar system and universe.

Another negative applies to the research done by creationists themselves which is partly misguided if it is dominated by the assumption of a young universe. Most of the problems regarding radioactivity are better understood and resolved by postulating an older earth with young biology. Inheritance of daughter elements from magma sources easily explains a lot of data if we do not limit age to a few thousand years. Certainly, questions related to the speed of light have more reasonable answers from an old universe perspective. This complaint of misguided research is similar to the charge we often legitimately level against evolutionists, namely, building a philosophy on unprovable assumptions and forcing all the research to reflect those assumptions.

We can be at ease with any figure, large or small, for the age of planet earth and the universe, as long as the number is not specifically limited to less than 10,000 years. If Scripture leaves the question unanswered, we may look cautiously to science and make our guesses without premature conclusions.

When dinosaurs and other fossils were first discovered, some Christians felt intimidated because many scientists believed they indicated millions of geological years, inimical to the biblical record. So these Christians suggested that God created the fossils and put them in the rocks just to "test our faith." People may invoke excuses like this to solve any problem but it is a poor tactic. God put fossils there not to test our faith but to *confirm* our faith as a powerful testimony to the Flood. We must simply correct our flawed assumptions. Surely, God could create light rays en route, or place fossils in rock (no argument there), but a much more straightforward and simple explanation solves the problem with no adverse reflection on Scripture, the character of God or to true science.

The history of the creation science movement reveals a

search for various places of refuge regarding the speed of light question. Henry Morris offers the refuge that light rays were created en route with images pre-encoded in the beam. Setterfield proposes that the speed of light was initially infinite or near that, and is now slowing down. Fallen in disfavor for a while, it is being revived. Some resort to a Reimannian space model which, by a supposed relativistic space curvature, allows light to arrive from the farthest galaxies in just sixteen years. The current hope for some time has been to find refuge in Russell Humphreys' relativistic model, which essentially allows the universe to be both, billions of years old relative to the outermost galaxies, and 6,000 years old relative to the earth. This idea depends on the earth being near the center of gravitational mass, and assumes the earth was near an "event horizon" during the six days of Genesis 1. We will say more about this and Barry Setterfield's concept in chapter seven. In any case, all these are nothing but sanctuaries for creationists who have a major problem. Small wonder that evolutionists scoff at such desperate gymnastics.

Radioisotope ratios indicating millions of years age for earth's crust are another big problem for young earth creationists which has never been resolved. Even if Dr. Humphreys model becomes plausible for light, radioisotopes are still a burr in the saddle. The light problem and the isotope problem mostly vanish with an undefined age for the universe and earth. Yes, problems remain, but all of them are resolvable without resorting to far out special pleading.

2. YOUNG-UNIVERSE SCENARIO GIVES AN UNSATISFACTORY PICTURE

It seems ludicrous to picture an isolated planet just sitting alone in empty space, developing soils and vegetation (day three), then a universe being built around it with all its orbital velocities and the earth accelerated into those velocities! Certainly, God could do that with ease, as to say, "Sun stand still." But does He normally do things that way—make the pudding without a pan? Why not believe the simplicity of verse 1? In the beginning God created the galaxies and everything else called "heavens," including the planet earth. That primordial earth was desolate, empty, exclusively oceanic and covered with a thick water cloud, thus shrouded in darkness. The entire account in Genesis, using an undefined-age-of-the-universe scenario, is much more sensible than alternatives. Allow yourself to see the whole picture as presented here. The verse one account introduces planet earth as a functioning part of the universe as we know it today.

The planets are called "stars" in the Bible. Are we then to

believe that God created the earth, fitted it with vegetation, and on a fourth day created Venus, Mars, Jupiter, the sun and moon and flung them around a speeding earth when they are made from essentially the same materials? No—a verse 1 completion of the planets including earth, the sun, and the moon is much more reasonable. If it looks, walks, quacks like a duck it could be a duck and if it looks, acts, warms like sunlight it could be sunlight unless God specified differently. Would He not tell us if He made and then removed a temporary light? That is a very big speculation. It makes more sense to conclude that the six-day work prepared the previously created planet for organic life by clearing the cloud of thick darkness to transparency with no reference to star creation.

The “fluidic chaos” theory is also unsatisfactory. The God of the Bible has no such record of creating chaos. God is a God of order (I Corinthians 14:33). The English translation, “without form and void” should be checked with usages elsewhere in the canon. The original Hebrew (in this context) does not convey an idea of primordial fluidic chaos, but rather one of desolation or emptiness over a sterile oceanic planet with no land, plants, or animals.

Just imagine the great leap from an earth defined as “all the atoms of the universe” to the planet of day three with its ocean, continents and trees. There is no description of the transition, and the original state is utterly vague. Were Mars and Venus a fluidic chaos when God spoke them into existence? Europa and Callisto have an earth-like hydrosphere. Were these satellites a fluidic chaos before another operation made them like the earth? We do not know precise history but verse 2 describes a coherent body, desolate and empty—not chaotic.

Conventional attempts to decipher the meaning of “*tohu wabohu*” depend on usage, contexts, sentence construction, and clues from the Hebrew language itself, but the subtraction method suggested in chapter one simply *looks at the scene* after removing the six day work. It is better to admire an artist's work than to analyze the paint. To witness a sunrise is much better than many descriptive words. We have witnessed the vast ocean, the force of gravity and near total darkness. With this in mind, we simply “look at the scene” of the primordial conditions without a seminary course in Hebrew, valuable as that may be. Scholarship may not be able to give a clear-cut answer on this phrase anyway.

The subtraction method of interpretation has an added benefit. Some interpreters feel that the “heavens and earth” of verse 1 is the same atmosphere and dry land of verses 6 and 9, as though verse 1 were only an introduction and the actual creation of the planet and stars had taken place some time before. But the sub-

traction process leaves us with an earth just as we know planets today (although without any dry land). And if a functioning planetary earth in fact existed, it had to be created sometime. Why not regard verse 1 as the record of its creation when the text uses those precise words as plainly as words can be spoken? Similarly, the created heavens (including a functioning sun) explain the origin of day, night, evening and morning in verse 3 with serene simplicity.

Imagine hiking (or rafting before the big freeze) over any of the terrestrial planets or satellites in suitable space equipment. One would only conclude that they were, every one of them, waste and desolate, deserted and empty. Two of terrestrial type bodies would be shrouded in clouds as earth is described in verse 2. Thus, a similar interpretation of "desolate and empty" and "darkness on the ocean surface" is very believable for Genesis 1:2. There is no credible illustration in the solar system which demonstrates the fluidic chaos or water ball which is imagined by some. Is there any celestial body anywhere which can provide an illustration? The fluidic chaos concept is wholly subjective—the picture will be different for every head, and therefore of no value to anyone. But take the simple language, using common illustrations, and the description is understandable in terms of common knowledge. Actual bodies in the solar system illustrate this simple concept satisfactorily. By contrast, the fluidic chaos conjectures leave the mind spinning and each mind is free to spin differently.

3. PRE-ENCODED STARLIGHT INVOLVES ILLUSION

Incomplete understanding of the Bible always confuses and forces its victim to seek ways to interpret science or Scripture to suit that incomplete understanding. The result is an unsatisfactory picture which erects still another obstacle to creation science.

If we leave the age of the universe undefined, answers appear for all the problems without illusory devices. There is time for angels, the fall of Satan, the speed of light, radioisotope ratios and more. Surely, God could create 48-hour-old angels, endowed with the intellectual capacity to "rejoice at the foundation of the earth." Surely, He could create light rays en route to give the appearance of age to the galaxies. Yes, He could pre-encode images of supernova explosions, gamma ray bursts, quasars, pulsars, Cepheid variables and much more. But He could also create four big elephants on the back of a huge turtle, big enough to hold up a stationary world as the Hindu myth teaches. He could. God could do that. However, pre-encoded light beams are a completely unsatisfactory explanation, just like turtles. Where did He ever say that He did any of those

things? Ptolemy devised “epicycles” and circular orbits centered on an “equant” to explain the occasional, apparent retrograde motion of planets. Creationists are forced by similar erroneous assumptions to use unreasonable devices to explain light. A correct interpretation of Genesis eliminates the problem.

God made trees and men full grown and mature but to make stars with light rays enroute involves creating illusory images. There is nothing illusory about trees created with rings, or hair with shingled structure suggesting its history, but to pre-encode gamma ray bursts from far out in space which never really occurred involves illusion—not characteristic of God. Fictitious stellar history is an entirely different moral question than the creation of fully mature trees that are actually only one hour old. A post-creation observer would be hard pressed to assign age to items like that.

Gary Parker questions in Creation Ex Nihilo June - August 1996, “Did Adam have a belly button? ... No - Adam didn't. Neither did Eve. ... Our first parents ... didn't develop (like the rest of us needing an umbilical cord). I believe that God would not have planted upon them a false indication that they had developed in a mother's womb.” Amen to that. But would He give illusions with light ray images? Appearance of age for a newly created, fully formed, tangible Adam and Eve is a far cry from appearance of age for things that never happened. This is significant and worthy of contemplation. God scrupulously refuses to deceive anyone.

If any of us had to choose between a God who pretends reality with light beams or a God who “waits” for billions of years, we would choose the latter. Wouldn't you? He does not wait anyway, worrying and wishing time would pass. In our human way of thinking we dislike the idea of God waiting for 12 billion years but He had an eternity before that. If time were a problem He would simply have started the engine up 12 billion years earlier and then tended other things in the meantime (that is, imagining for a minute that time is something God needs to deal with at all).

We look at the vastness of the universe and stand in awe at the God who is greater than his creation and transcendent over it. No one knows the age of the universe. However, if one accepts sufficient age for light traveling at presently measured rates to reach earth from the farthest galaxy, the same awe thrills the soul.

Think of all the things God did *not* divulge to us in Genesis 1:1, like galaxies, quasars, background radiation, pulsars, white dwarfs and the dimensions of the whole thing. Surely it is no surprise to find Him withholding the *time* of stellar creation from the Bible record if He has withheld its dimensions. When and how He created is of no consequence to His purpose regarding men, angels and redemp-

tion.

Contemplation of the God who is beyond both time and space and transcending His creation fills us with wonder. It glorifies God to gaze into the timelessness of God—the Lord of vast, fathomless periods of time, as well as the Lord of vast, fathomless space. Scripture defines neither end of space nor beginning of time. Contemplation of either leaves us in awe. One thing is sure, a creation was constructed by the Creator, supernaturally. Escape from that fact is impossible and should leave us with bated breath.

Some readers will find it frightening to embark on new interpretive ground without support from a large consensus of leadership authority. Because an old universe is so easily associated with old geology, young-earth people are gun shy at the outset and only a few venture on new ground. But remember Abram, who set out for the land of promise relying exclusively on a message from God. Remember lonely Elijah, lonely Jeremiah, lonely Job and lonely Noah. Remember Copernicus and Galileo and, in our day, remember lonely Alfred Wegener and Harlan Bretz. Remember, also, those two lonely Morton-Thiokol engineers who warned strenuously against the Challenger launch that frigid January morning. Truth is not determined by a show of hands.

Historically, virtually all innovators are met with skepticism. It remains true that no matter how correct a pioneer in controversial areas *finally* proves to be, yet most people will not give him serious consideration *until* he achieves a significant following.

We will never remove the obstacles that are erected against creation science if we defend biblical as well as scientific errors. The Bible view offered here is well worth our confidence and the reward is a solid, unassailable testimony worthy of the Lord.

Donald DeYoung, creationist astronomer, has offered the only defense that holds some strength in behalf of the “light-rays-created-enroute” idea. It is a thought that has escaped others who defend the idea of the “appearance of age” for a young universe and it was new to me. He asks about the new heavens and the new earth and how the heavens could be visible to earthlings if those heavens are created way out there and requiring millions of years to become visible. If the new heavens resemble the old, it would require four years before the first star was visible. After a hundred years, many stars would be visible but no galaxies and no Milky Way.

My answer? Well, I congratulate him for that interesting thought. But secondly, would it be all that bad for resurrected humans to watch the heavens grow over the trillions to the trillionth power of years available to the redeemed? Each new observation

would result in their rejoicing together with the angelic morning stars. The redeemed will not be limited to the 7,000 year time slot allowed to the present order. Come to think of it, a progressively revealed new heavens would be kind of fun. Plus the new regime would likely be extremely different from the present order.

God, of course, can do anything. Can we preclude His having made a completely new heavens long ago, with different physical laws, transcendent to the current order awaiting the entrance of the redeemed? After all, the Lord walked through walls after the resurrection using an entirely different kind of physics and He says, "Behold I make all things new." "They have no need of light ... for the Lamb is the light ..." Whether the first suggestion appeals more than the second is anyone's choice but more probably it is neither. Who can know? Our wonderful God does. "Eye has not seen neither ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man the things He has prepared for them that love Him" (I Corinthians 2:9).

Still and all, DeYoung has offered an interesting thought.

Particle physicists at Princeton have accelerated light pulses to 300 times the normal speed of light. Also, others have, so they say, slowed light down to near zero. A few young universe creationists seize upon news flashes like this like a drowning person clutches at straws because it gives them some hope that the universe could be young. Presumably to some of them the universe was "stretched out" at near infinite speed on the first day. Creationist's trusting theoretics like these for a rose-colored solution to the starlight problem reminds me of Hitler's futile promise to Germany near the end of the war that he had a secret weapon which would reverse the war news.

But even if breaking the speed barrier were *proven*, or earth passing near an event horizon on the fourth day were *proven*, the thesis of this book would not change. The cloud of thick darkness still shrouds earth before the first day, planet earth is fully formed at verse two, and the defined date for the six days of biosphere creation is still distinguished from the undefined creation date for the stars and the planet. Add to that the uncertainty of the experimental proposal and especially the unthinkable redshift such a rapid expansion of the universe would create. At that extremity, would not the highest frequency gamma rays be redshifted unrecognizably into less than a low frequency radio wave by the Doppler principle? Much better to relax with a sensible Bible interpretation than to gamble with theories or explanations understandable only to specialized scientists. God wrote the Bible for both peasants and scientists to understand and enjoy.

More on the starlight problem in the next chapter.

4. "RED HERRINGS" MADE FROM SPECULATION

How many creationists are currently placing their hopes on Humphreys' time dilation or ICR's "RATE" project suggesting accelerated isotope disintegration to explain hard to face physical realities. These theories provide a temporary sanctuary for intimidated believers but could easily be red herrings, diverting our attention with false hopes to be crushed when the truth prevails. Trusting on these theories could be "trusting on the staff of a broken reed, whereon, if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it" (Isaiah 36:6). These completely unnecessary theories could be the worst of all needless obstacles to creation science. (See next chapter.)

**VIRTUALLY ALL INNOVATORS
ARE MET WITH SKEPTICISM**

Mechanical Engineering Magazine

November 1999

**WHAT GREAT CAUSE
WOULD HAVE BEEN
FOUGHT AND WON
UNDER THE BANNER,
"I STAND FOR CONSENSUS!"**

?

Margaret Thatcher

TRUTH, OVEREMPHASIZED, IS NO LONGER TRUTH. TRUTH, MISAPPLIED, IS NO LONGER TRUTH. Abram Miller, Estacada, OR

AS A RING IN A BULL'S NOSE EASILY LEADS A SUBDUED ANIMAL, SO A FAULTY PARADIGM LEADS TO FAULTY INTERPRETATION, NO MATTER WHERE ONE TURNS IN SCRIPTURE. (pages 38-39)

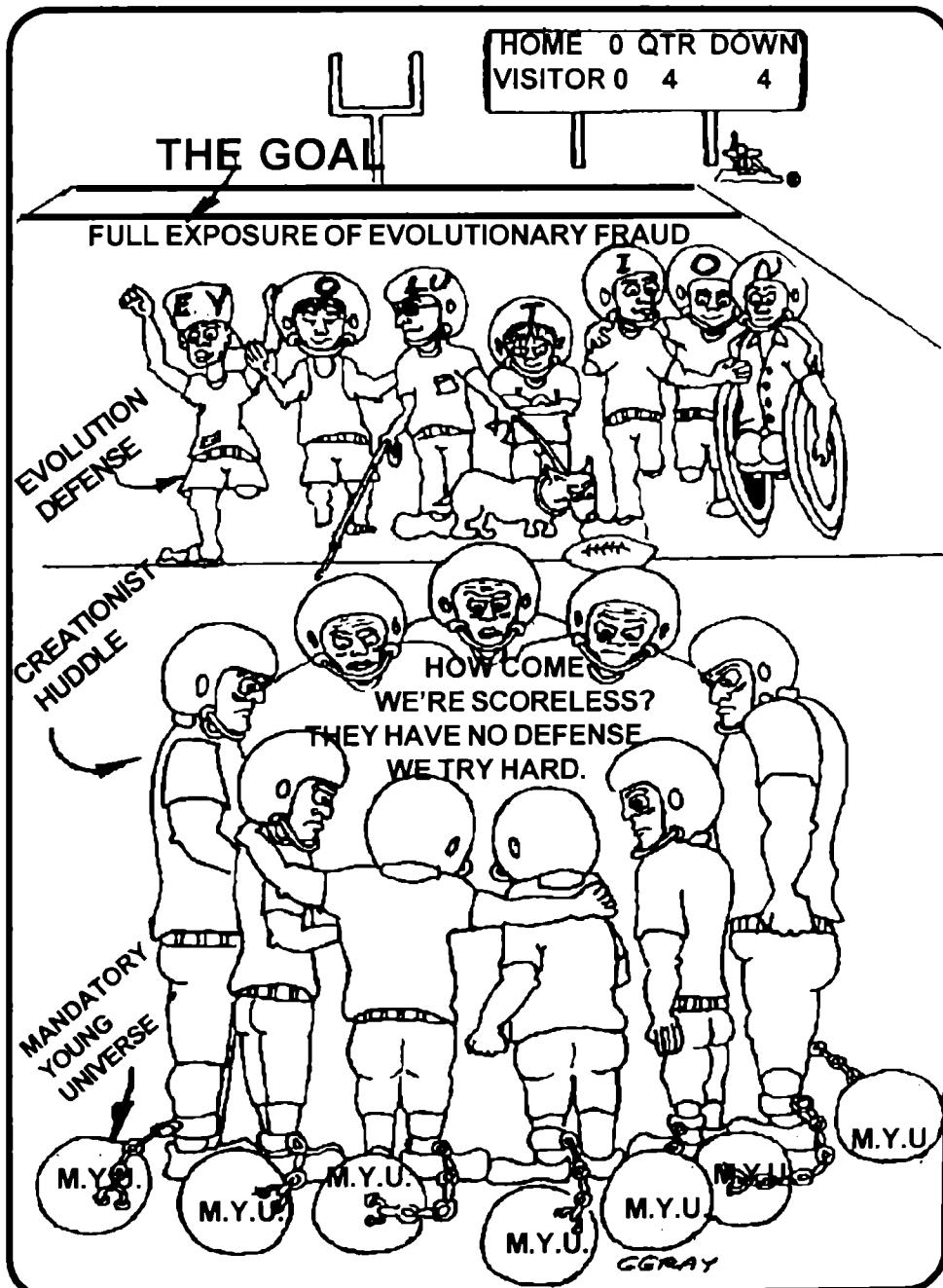
WE TEND TO APPROACH SCRIPTURE WITH OUR SYSTEM IN MIND AND THEN SEEK TO IMPOSE THAT SYSTEM ON SCRIPTURE.

Dr. Willard Aldrich, Washougal, WA

TRUTH HAS NOTHING TO FEAR

UNDER INVESTIGATION

Aldon Thompson



Note to Readers

The material in this chapter could be updated due to revisions which have been made by Dr. Humphreys since publication of *Starlight and Time*. Samuel Conner and Hugh Ross have a paper available on the web at: <http://www.reasons.org/resources/apologetics/unravelling.html>. They state: "In his latest effort to defend *Starlight and Time*, Humphreys actually quietly abandons it. The three central arguments of the original *Starlight and Time* proposal were:" (They then name the arguments). "It has been shown in a number of articles (referenced) that all three of these claims are manifestly false. In particular, ..." (and they name the particulars). Whether these allegations are true or not I leave with the physicists.

The arguments between Conner and Humphreys were published in the Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal v. 12, n.2 (1998) pp. 195-212

I am not qualified to have an opinion about the arguments from physics. As readers will note, my arguments show the invalidity of Dr. Humphreys' interpretation of Scripture. Let the physical arguments be debated among his peers as above. It is my opinion that Dr. Ross makes an equally grave error as does Humphreys (although in another area) by promoting progressive creation in what appears to be an attempt to harmonize mainstream evolutionary paleontology with Scripture which, in my opinion, is impossible and contrary to the facts of geology and paleontology. This book approves Dr. Humphreys' view of recent creation of organic life and flood geology (far preferred to Dr. Ross' view of progressive creation) but approves Dr. Ross' view of the age of the stars above that of Humphreys.

Gorman Gray

CHAPTER

7

"Don't worry, Jack, I would stake my life on our record."

RELATIVISM QUESTIONED FOR ITS BIBLICAL BASIS AND THE SETTERFIELD COMEBACK

Dr. Russell Humphreys' book, *Starlight and Time*, has received widespread attention among creationists. Many creationists may resort to Humphreys' explanation in their search for a solution to the biggest problem facing them. Because of its popularity, his proposal must be addressed here. To question a theory by no means represents a personal criticism. This man is a great asset to the creation science movement and, like so many young-universe adherents, a pleasure to know personally.

Dr. Humphreys represents his work as somewhat tentative and subject to revision in the theoretical physics aspect of his relativistic cosmology. He also attempts to provide a biblical basis for his view. This chapter will quote excerpts from his book, and in so doing, leaves his physical arguments unfairly represented as a whole. The reader should not conclude that his view, especially the physics of his view, is epitomized in this chapter. However, a strong effort is made to present in a fair manner the biblical basis which Humphreys claims for his cosmology as it compares to the brood/biosphere model of this writing.

RELATIVISM IN A NUTSHELL

Dr. Humphreys uses the general theory of relativity and applies it to the early universe under conditions in which gravitational time dilation could be enormous. According to his theory, billions of years may have been available for light to travel to the earth from the farthest galaxy, while a few days passed on earth.

This would be impossible unless the earth is near the center of the gravitational mass of a bounded universe. Dr. Humphreys describes a mass of water created within a black hole, then transformed into a white hole, and expanding throughout space. (Starlight and Time 6,pp32-35).

In order for the time dilation in Humphreys' model to be adequate, the earth must have passed through or near what physicists refer to as an "event horizon," a phenomenon theoretically experienced near a black hole. Dr. Humphreys suggests that this may have taken place during the fourth day of creation, which he believes marks the time when God coalesced the clusters of atomic matter into stars and galaxies—thus beginning thermonuclear fusion in them. Because the event horizon passes in the vicinity of the earth on day four, billions of years of physical processes take place in the distant cosmos, while only a few days occur on the earth. This allows us to see starlight from galaxies billions of light years away, even though the earth is only a few thousand years old (6,pp37-38).

The implications of general relativity have been well substantiated by many empirical observations over the years. However, to force a relativistic cosmology on the six days of Genesis 1, is quite another matter, and may promote a major error. The biblical basis for Dr. Humphreys' idea seems insecure and could engender a terribly misdirected cosmology. This is a big and unnecessary gamble and could ultimately be embarrassing for creationists. Dr. Humphreys has endured severe testing by his fellow physicists but if his concept survives widespread peer review, the physics could be considered. However, the supposed biblical basis appears so subjective that Humphreys' introductory hypotheses must be questioned.

Physicists can apply their theories to Genesis 1:1 if they choose, and no objection would arise if Dr. Humphreys were to apply his theory to the first sentence in the Bible. But his use of the six days of biosphere preparation as a framework for his cosmology is without a firm foundation. Dr. Humphreys' biblical exegesis appears forced and unnatural. It is a prime example of the extent to which people are driven by the young universe concept.

Many cosmologists have attempted to squeeze Genesis into their mold. At least a half dozen mutually incompatible theistic evolution ideas and progressive creation ideas (all the way to New Age with various intermediate positions) have taken their turn at the forge. Evangelical scholars have made similar attempts to hammer a pre-conceived system over the Genesis narrative. It is fair to say that no other literature has endured such abuse.

Any cosmology by Christian physicists should be derived from the interpretation of Genesis—not the other way around. What could be wrong with a cosmogony which stipulates nothing more

than stellar creation by divine fiat? It just may be that God has bypassed the black hole/white hole or the big bang. Maybe He started with matter which was antecedent to galaxies, or maybe He started with the galaxies already intact.

Perhaps we exist in the expansion phase of a universe which seeks expansional equilibrium, like a balloon inside another balloon expands or contracts in response to exterior pressure changes. Perhaps He began the universe in an expanding mode, without starting from localized dense matter. The Bible's reputation should not be gambled on the ephemeral ideas of cosmologists, no matter how well-intentioned.

Compelling physical evidence is fine, but until someone proves that the earth lies near the center of the gravitational mass of the universe, no compelling physical evidence exists to support a relativistic explanation, salvaging the concept of a young earth. We could just as well say, "Yes, relativism exists, but we are one-third of universe width off the center of mass and we need to account for twelve billion years of galaxy age." After all, the geocentrists were wrong as few would doubt today. But even if it were discovered that earth is near center of mass, it would not prove the hypothesis. Would not time constraints for nearby galaxies be utterly disproportionate to that required for the far out boundary galaxies? Suppose the relativistic math works out for the farthest galaxy, can the same framework answer for M31 Andromeda, less than 2 million light years away? I can only bring the question, certainly not the answer.

Dr. Humphreys makes much of the scriptures which refer to God "stretching out the heavens like a tent curtain." He attempts to link this metaphor to his relativistic cosmology. God talks in the Bible about "stretching forth the heavens," but He also talks about carpenters stretching forth the measuring line on a building project (the same word is used for "stretching"). Many a builder has stretched out his measuring tape, and the last thing the builder wants is an elastic tape. The very nature of the carpenter's work requires a stable medium, like steel, for a measuring rule. One of the words for "stretch" refers to stretching out the earth (Psalm 136:6). No one would suggest that the earth has undergone appreciable relativistic stretching. The same word for 'spreading out' the heavens in Job 9:8 is used for the carpenter 'stretching out' his measuring rule in Isaiah 44:13 in the construction of an idol. To glean general relativity from those passages reads extraordinary meanings into the passages. This is not to say that relativism cannot be true in the physical world. However, the "stretch" passages in the Bible are unrelated to relativism.

When a nomad stretches forth his tent curtains, he simply unrolls the tent material, laying it out over structural poles which are

elevated into a domelike vault resembling the skies above. Merely gazing at the vast canopy of stars makes it plain. The heavens are stretched out—they are spread out like a tent canopy in the visual scan of an observer—relativism or no relativism. Siberian legend had it that the Milky Way was a seam in the tent fabric of the heavens. To suggest that “stretching like a tent curtain” could not be understood until after 1916 and Einstein, cheapens the Scripture.

The universe appears to be expanding. It is being stretched out in that sense. Relativity is well established to most physicists but it is a mistake to “stretch the Scripture” into new theoretics when an everyday concept of stretching out tent canopies or measuring rules fits the interpretation more sensibly.

Nonscientists have no way to determine the correctness of Humphreys’ model. His cosmology may be a physically allowable speculation, but the rationale involved in its construction does not represent a factual treatment of the physical history of the cosmos.

Humphreys’ position cannot be concluded as entirely wrong or in violation of Genesis 1, although the biblical side of his model appears to be a much less “straightforward” interpretation of the Genesis record than he claims. Dr. Humphreys assumes (for example) that an open-minded reader would interpret “firmament” or “expanse” to mean the volume from the end of space down to our atmosphere (6,p58-59). That idea is easily challenged.

A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR CREATIONISTS

The intense discussion of the speed of light at conferences and in publications proves this phenomenon to be a major problem for creationists. If relativism garners extensive support now, then all the previous theories are abandoned and might be embarrassing. Proponents of relativism may be blushing also when the next attempt to explain starlight and time gains a major following.

To assert that this problem could not be resolved before 1916 with the development of general relativity theory (a theory understandable to only a few) seems suspect at the entrance to the discussion. God knows the end from the beginning, and He wrote the Bible for simple people to understand, including millions of people before 1916.

If we creationists offer to the naturalists one more mistaken attempt to explain a dilemma, it will “give much occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme” (II Samuel 12:14). All the attempts to explain the speed of light and at the same time preserve a young universe remind one of Cuvier’s attempt to reconcile science and the Bible by postulating his “Theory of the Earth,” which resulted in disaster for creationism in the 19th century. Similarly, creationists today clutch at straws on the speed-of-light subject.

With better hermeneutics, creationists can relax. Where the Bible maintains silence, we go to science and guess the best we can. Let the cosmologists cosmologize, remembering that cosmologies come and go. If established science favors a young universe, we may cautiously accept that. If it indicates that an old universe is probable, we may, with the same caution, accept that. We can be quite comfortable with a young or an old universe. But ordinary people, not constricted by a young universe preconception, might conclude that the universe is old enough for light to reach the earth from the farthest galaxy at presently measured speeds. The age remains a questionable guess, and should be subject to change within the bounds of Scripture and the conclusions of sound science. There is room for speculations regarding cosmology as long as the biblical record is not violated and as long as our guesses are clearly labeled as guesses or hypotheses.

It is noteworthy that very few astronomical discoveries arise from theoretical considerations. On the contrary, theories are formed, only to be dashed by better instrumentation. This provides a warning to us about the theory that earth lies at the “center of gravitational mass,” which is strictly hypothesis.

In a foreword to Dr. Humphreys’ book, Ken Ham, widely known creationist lecturer, states (regarding the starlight/size-of-the-universe question), “I have heard scientists attempt to solve this seemingly insurmountable problem for those who believe the Bible’s account of a young world. However, until I read Dr. Russ Humphreys’ new creationist cosmology as outlined in this book, I was not convinced of real progress towards a complete, scientifically satisfying framework” (6,p6).

This statement acknowledges that all the other explanations were, in his view, “unsatisfactory,” and the evidence “seemingly insurmountable.” He clings to the hope that *this new explanation* will provide an answer even if few people understand relativity.

Regardless of the eventual recognition of Dr. Humphreys’ model, the reason he searches for a solution is based on a partially faulty paradigm demanding a young earth. It is no wonder creationists scramble for solutions when a ring in the nose tugs them in the wrong direction (namely, the concept of a young earth at any cost).

One Jewish researcher, Dr. Gerald Schroeder, hypothesizes a relativistic explanation exactly the opposite of Dr. Humphreys’ model. He proposes that the universe aged only six days in God’s time frame, while the universe and earth aged 13 billion years—giving abundant time (in his mind) for life forms to evolve. His gravitational time dilation is similar (but reversed) to Humphreys’ model (Genesis and the Big Bang 11, p52,53). A followup book by Shroeder, The Science of God, attempts to show mathematical pat-

terns which answer to the various “days” of creation which he regards as of millions of years.

Schroeder has an agenda. He wants to allow for 13 billion years of evolutionary time in the universe and still hold to the 5,750 years since Adam, and the six days of creation indicated in Genesis. Dr. Humphreys also has an agenda (equal and opposite to Schroeder’s) to solve the unsolvable—a young planet earth and time for starlight transit. Either man can use relativity theory to accomplish his objective. Using relativity as a mechanism, it appears that one size fits all.

All this leaves us nonphysicists (and theoretical physicists as well) with many questions and little assurance. I speak with respect, having been there myself, but Dr. Schroeder has capitulated to the “strong delusion” which prevails worldwide—the fact-free hypothesis of evolution. Dr. Humphreys’ objective, without evolutionary baggage is more commendable, but still unnecessary.

The objectives of these physicists are not justified, because each is based on a false premise. Scripture defines neither the universe nor planet earth as young. End of concern. Stop preaching a young universe and proceed with research.

Dr. Schroeder is forced to resort to very unusual and bizarre definitions for the words of Genesis 1. To support his old earth, theistic evolutionary thesis, the words are contorted similarly to creationist usage when they defend a young earth. Following are some examples from Schroeder’s book:

“Evening” means “mixed up, stirred together, disorderly.” “Morning” means “discernible, able to distinguish, orderly” (11, p97). The terms for water, , wind, heavens and earth in the first ten verses of Genesis have meanings that are quite different when used later on in the Bible (11, p13,14). The biblical allusion to this one time inflation (the beginnings of the big bang) is found in Genesis 1:2. And darkness was on the face of the deep [the primeval space created at the beginning], and a wind of God [a one time force mentioned only here in all of Genesis] moved on the face of the water [the common stuff from which the heavens, the earth and all that they contain would be produced](11, p93).

On the third day of Genesis, plant life appeared. This occurred just after the Hebrew term for water took on its present meaning... the substance that fills the seas.

In other words, the language of Genesis, until the third day, means nothing at all—or anything the writer wants those words to mean! Echoes of the garden of Eden? “Yea, hath God said...?”

The Critical Scriptures

Author's Preferred Renditions

(No single translation is adequate for good exegesis and many standard translations are satisfactory.)

Genesis 1:1-3 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was deserted and empty and darkness was on the surface of the ocean. And the Spirit of God was brooding over the waters.

Then God said, Let there be light ...

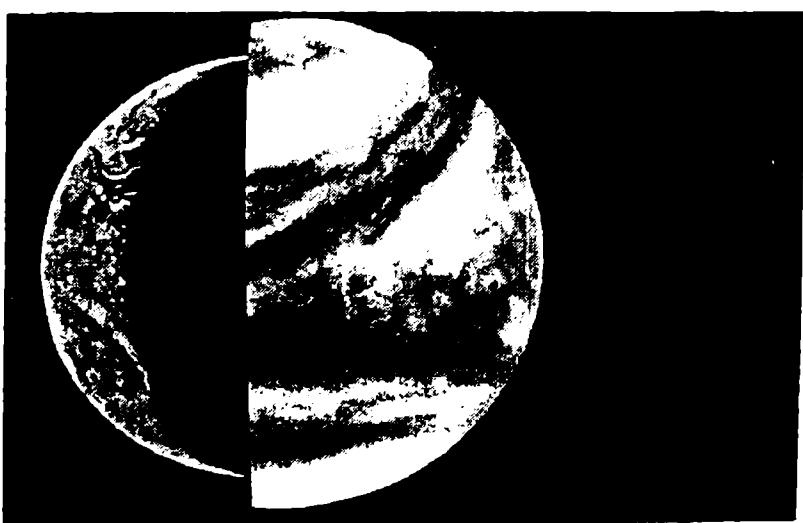
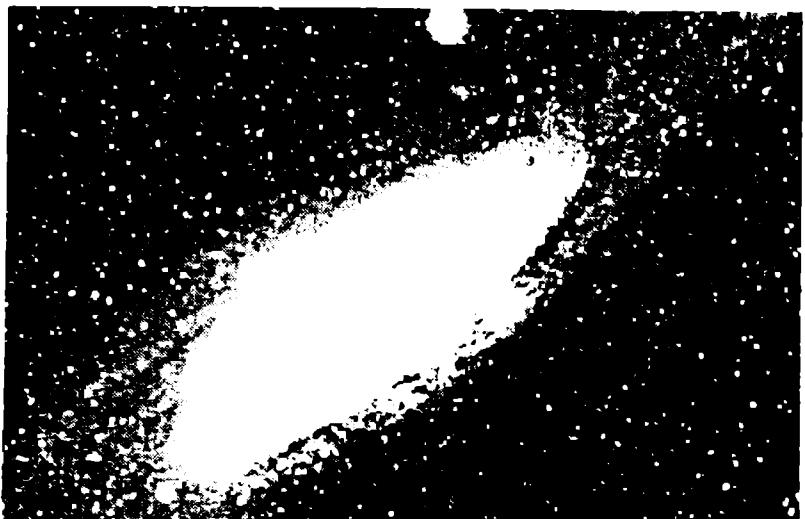
There was evening and there was morning—day one.

Genesis 1:14-16 And God said, Let luminaries in the expanse of the air be for separating the day from the night. And let them serve as signals to mark seasons and days and years. And let them be luminaries in the expanse of the air to give light upon the earth. And it was so. God brought forth** two great luminaries—the greater luminary to dominate the day and the lesser luminary to dominate the night—the stars also. God gave them forth in the expanse of the air ...

Job 38:4, 8-9 Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation? ... Who shut up the sea behind doors when it burst forth from the womb, when I made the clouds its garment and thick darkness a swaddling band for it ...?

Exodus 20:11 For six days Yahweh worked on** the air and the land, the sea and all that is in them ...

** The Hebrew word is very general—translated over seventy different ways—did, worked, brought forth, established, prepared, made, accomplished, arranged. The first sight of stars is similar to the first sight of Spring buds and blossoms, (in that context translated “brought forth”). The main thrust of day four is the establishment of signs and seasons and the viewing point is from the surface of the earth... Genesis 1:16 and Exodus 20:11 (where translated “made”) does **NOT** mean “created.” All choices depicted above become understandable from the textual exegesis within this book. See pp 47-53.



In the beginning God created the galaxies, sun, moon and stars probably much as we know them today or their ancestral antecedents. It is not revealed in Scripture when this creation took place. It was not chaotic. From the biblical record, it might have been recent or it might have been billions of years ago. For the actual age, we are limited to the questionable guesses of science.

The earth was without a biosphere, desolate, sterile and empty, like the other terrestrial planets and satellites of today. It was covered entirely with ocean like Europa and shrouded in a “thick darkness of clouds” like Venus for an undefined time (Job 38:9). The darkness did not permeate all of space but only the “surface of earth’s ocean” (Genesis 1:2). The rest of the universe had been filled with light for an unspecified amount of time.

The first day on earth occurred when God thinned out the dense cloud cover. On day four He cleared it completely. During six literal, solar days, 7500 years ago or less, God created and made the biosphere and all living creatures. During the Genesis flood, less than 6000 years ago, the world was ruined and became the vast graveyard of fossils observed today.

By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that which is seen was not made out of what is visible.

Hebrews 11:3

One can understand a theistic evolutionist like Dr. Schroeder doing this, but the sad truth is that creationists follow suit, as documented in Chapter 2. A disturbing similarity exists between the words of Dr. Schroeder and the words found in Drs. Humphreys' and Morris' works, even though they promote three different viewpoints.

Evolutionists have created a huge edifice based on the hypothesis of eons of biological time. They have filled that edifice with innumerable supporting arguments which are quite convincing to collegiate neophytes who gaze on the gigantic structure. The evolutionary persuasion seems formidable even though it rests on a foundation of sand. Perhaps creationists have built their own structure on a foundation of an unprovable young universe. We have filled our building with many arguments, many of them based on speculations and pet theories.

Creationists expend enormous energy to resolve the speed-of-light question and to provide evidence for a young earth. Some creationists simply cannot see contradictory data. Like evolutionary theorists (although perhaps unintentionally) they dispose of facts that don't fit the young universe theory, or they obscure them, or distort them with specious reasoning.

Certainly, not all creationists can be accused of this, but all are subject to the temptation. The prospect of better biblical interpretation should allow one to relax and look for any evidence *with equal enthusiasm*. Within the constricted and hobbled young-universe position, however, we encounter a strong temptation to accept only confirming data. This promotes closed minds and bad science. Relativism probably mollifies a problem with false hope.

Suppose the young universe (or earth near gravitational center) concept turns out to be wrong. Then a Satanic opportunity emerges to peddle the conclusion that the Bible is not trustworthy—when actually it is the flawed paradigm imposed on the Bible that is in error. We could be trusting in a disaster waiting to happen—a Satanic trap. We should prefer not to venture on the thin ice of one or many scientists' opinions, no matter how well-meaning their motives.

It would be a great relief if we could announce to the world that the speed-of-light/magnitude-of-the-universe question, which has for so long been a major obstacle to non-creationists, is resolved satisfactorily by the creationist admission that we have simply been reading the text incorrectly. Some adversaries would be more influenced by our humility than by all of our intellectual arguments.

Dr. Humphreys' work on relativism is worthy of cautious consideration. In my view, the final relativistic condition could be entertained from the perspective of physics provided it passes peer review. However, the supposed biblical basis for relativism is disap-

pointing, and makes questionable the preliminary cosmology which he proposes.

The remainder of this chapter discusses the biblical basis for relativism—not the physical relativism itself. Dr. Humphreys proposes an excellent method for determining correct biblical interpretation. He suggests what we might call “the Timothy principle.” We quote:

To make these points a little clearer, imagine a young Jewish Christian of the first century who understands Greek, Hebrew, and the Scriptures well. Let's call him 'Timothy' since Paul's protege was like that. But let's also imagine that this Timothy knows nothing of the advanced scientific knowledge of his day, such as Aristotle's works. All that Timothy knows is from either everyday experience or careful study of Scripture, which Paul says is sufficient to give us wisdom (II Tim 3:15). Now, if Scripture really is straightforward and sufficient, then the meaning Timothy derives from the words is probably the meaning that God intended everybody to get (6,p57).

So far, so good. Dr. Humphreys' Timothy principle is heartily approved. This is precisely the principle which has guided this present work. But despite this sound theory of interpretation, Dr. Humphreys develops a view very far removed from the thesis of this book. Dr. Humphreys professes to use the same principle of interpretation as this writing, but widely differing conclusions are reached.

Dr. Humphreys continues,

For example when Timothy reads in Exodus 20:11:
For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy, he notices that the context is that of ordinary days of the week. Not having *Scientific American* to tell him that the earth is billions of years old, Timothy is not looking for loopholes in this statement. Instead he simply concludes that scripture is saying Yahweh made the whole universe in six ordinary weekdays. My point is that if scripture is what it claims to be, then we ought to take Timothy's view of the passage and not try to twist the words into new meanings compatible with *Scientific American*'s world view or for that matter into anyone else's world view.

Obviously, Dr. Humphreys defines “heavens” as the entire

universe and he interprets “made” in the sense of create. It is precisely here that the central, critical issue in this discussion emerges. Timothy could be (and should be) represented as viewing Exodus 20:11 from an entirely different perspective. After all, Timothy is not reading from the King James Version or any other translation. Timothy would surely believe, with David and all the prophets, that there are at least two definitions of “heavens” and two definitions of “earth” in relation to the six-day context. We must accept only definitions of heaven and earth which do not conflict with those supplied by God Himself during those identified six days—namely, atmospheric heavens and continental lands.

The preposition “in” (For “in” six days) would not be in Timothy’s mind at all, for the word is not in the text. And Timothy knows that *asah* is an *extremely* common word with many uses and always requires contextual guidance for meaning.

Dr. Bernard Northrup’s translation helps us English-speaking people understand what Timothy probably thought. It is not twisted in any way, but rather more faithful to the original Hebrew.

*For six days the Eternal LORD worked on
the heavens, the earth and the sea and all that is in
them and rested on the seventh day.*

Timothy is not reading English or Swahili. He is reading Hebrew and the very last thing that would be in his mind would be that God was creating anything *ex nihilo*. The Hebrews had a much clearer word for that (*bara*), if God had so meant. Timothy, recalling the record in Genesis 1, considers the six day work. He is not confused by words like “without form and void” or “deep.” He plainly knows that *tehown* means ocean and *rachaf* means brood or hover or relax, relating to mother bird. Also, as he remembers Job he does not warp the interpretation of Genesis. He knows that the earth, at its birth, was shrouded in darkness by an opaque water cloud. He knows how David defined “heavens” in the Psalms and how God defined “heavens” on day two. He decides that the atmospheric definition should be chosen in Exodus and the dry land definition should be chosen for “earth” as in Genesis. Timothy understands that God took an already completed planet earth and performed additional work on it for six days, and then rested for one day as an example and precedent for man. This is a simple, straightforward interpretation involving air, land, and sea—not the original creation of the stars and planet earth.

Sometimes we Christians, who are so blessed by that precious, treasured book we carry, forget that it is only a translation of the Bible—not the Bible itself. Perhaps we need to be reminded vividly of that. There is a language barrier of considerable magnitude. Translators help us to get the original sense and usually there

is no serious difficulty, but Exodus 20:11 needs definition. It does *not* mean that God created the entire cosmos in the six days of Genesis.

COMPARISON OF VIEWS

Following is a parallel presentation of Dr. Humphreys' view with the biosphere model of this book. This allows the reader to decide which fulfills the "straightforward simplicity" requirement. Note that it is not Dr. Humphreys' cosmology that is under scrutiny here, but rather his attempt to find biblical justification for his cosmology. His astrophysical cosmology itself must stand or fall before the peer review and experimental testing by all members of the scientific community, whether Christian, Hindu, Atheist, or Moslem. In that arena, it is just one more theory. We are simply inquiring here whether it harmonizes with the Bible.

Translations preferred by either interpreter are accepted without question as long as they contain no gross violations of Hebrew grammar, syntax, or definition. Our purpose is to compare both views side by side in order to determine which is "probably the meaning that God intended everybody to get."

When quoting a translation from either author, clarifying language will be included to explain meanings. These and any commentary will be enclosed in brackets indicating editorial comment. For example, when Dr. Humphreys uses the word "expanse," [interstellar space] will be appended. But when using this paper's thesis for "expanse," [atmosphere or air] will be appended. This is done to eliminate any confusion of meaning. It should be noted that I allow the word "heaven" and "firmament" to refer to the atmosphere at times and sometimes to the starry vault, and still other times to a blend of both just as we do in English (but on day two, "firmament," "expanse" or "heaven" means earth's air).

Quotations and summations from Dr. Humphreys [RH] will be listed first. Because he mixes Timothy's supposed mental picture with his own relativistic interpretation, a consecutive picture of Timothy's alleged thoughts cannot be arranged perfectly from Dr. Humphreys' description.

The author's [GG] view will follow. The reader is the judge. Which view would Timothy most likely espouse?

v1. RH In the beginning God created the "heavens" and the "earth." [Dr. Humphreys states that Timothy would visualize space without any stars as "heaven." The "earth" is a formless, undefined region of water (within another vast mass of water called the deep)] (6,pp32,58).

v1. GG In the beginning God created the "heavens" and the

“earth.” [“Heavens” applies to sun, moon and stars (Psalms 8 and 19) and “earth” is the bare, unfurnished planet earth (Exodus 15:12)].

v2. RH And the earth was formless and void and darkness was on the face of the “deep.” [The “deep” is a ball of liquid water containing all the matter of the universe] (6,pp32,68- 70).

v2. GG And the earth was deserted and empty and darkness was on the surface of the ocean. [This is simply a description of the planet. The ocean covers the globe as an uninhabited, sterile surface of water. All this is totally darkened by a dense cloud cover.]

v2 cont. RH And the Spirit of God was moving on the face of the waters. [Spirit of God later provides a temporary light for the “earth” to give day and night before the sun was created] (6,pp33,75).

v2 cont. GG And the Spirit of God was brooding over the waters. [The metaphor indicates the patient waiting of a brooding bird.]

v3. RH And God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day. [This paragraph following is the most speculative of my (Russell Humphreys) reconstruction of events. As the (gravitational) compression continues, gravity becomes so strong that light can no longer reach the surface, darkening it again. Psalm 104:2, “Covering Thyself with light as with a cloak,” in context appears to refer to day one. This suggests to me (RH) that at this point the Spirit of God, “moving (or ‘hovering’) over the surface of the waters” (Genesis 1:2), becomes a light source, in the same way that He will again become a light source at a future time (Revelation 19:23, 20:5) {sic- a typo. He means Rev. 21:23 and 22:5} This would give the deep a bright side and a dark side, thus dividing light from darkness and inscribing, “a circle on the face of the waters, at the boundary of light and darkness” (Job 26:10)] (6,p33).

v3. GG Then God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light. And God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day,” and the darkness He called “night.” And there was evening and there was morning, day one. [The cloud of thick darkness referred to by God Himself in Job 38:9 had kept the ocean surface dark, perhaps for long ages, but God simply made it translucent on day one and transparent

on day four. The reference to evening and morning cannot be reconciled with ages of time, nor can it be sensibly reconciled with anything but a commonly understood planet rotating as it orbits the sun. These were solar days and there was a sun in the heavens to produce the night and day. God, throughout, speaks of normal, planetary days.]

v6. RH And God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate the waters from the waters.” And God made the expanse, and separated the waters that were above the expanse from the waters that were below the expanse. [Genesis 1:14-17 gives some direct information about the expanse which God also calls “heavens”: Then God said, “Let there be lights *in* the expanse of the heavens … and let them be for lights *in* the expanse of the heavens … and God made the two great lights … He made the stars also. And God placed them *in* the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth. In this passage I (RH) have italicized the little word “in” to emphasize an important point: the sun moon and stars are *in* the expanse. The Hebrew for “in” here is the prefix בְּ (b^e), which has essentially the same range of meanings as the English word “in”] (6,p.32,58).

RH continues:—[Now imagine what the Timothy of Section 2 would think about the expanse from this passage. I think everyone would agree that he would say that the expanse is the place where the sun, moon and stars are. Therefore the Timothy test leads me (RH) to conclude that the most straightforward understanding of the passage is that the *expanse is interstellar space*. Using our knowledge of distances of heavenly bodies, that means that the waters above the expanse must now be at cosmic distances from us, billions of light years away (not merely the atmosphere)] (6,58).

v6. GG Then God said, “Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water.” So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse “air.” And there was evening and there was morning—day two. [The Hebrews did not distinguish clearly between the atmosphere and interstellar space but spoke as things appeared to them. However, the Scriptures are scientifically accurate and we, today, must distinguish using the language and meanings that the Hebrews used. This point is not essential to the thesis of this writing, but it is essential to Dr. Humphreys’ model—hence his lengthy explanation above.

Light was in the diffuse atmosphere as of day one, but the luminaries themselves (greater light, lesser light and stars also) could

not have been “given forth” in the atmosphere if a semi-obsuring cloud remained after day one. When the atmosphere became transparent on day four, the luminaries were allowed in the atmosphere—“given forth” in the atmosphere just as we say, “Here comes the sun,” as the clouds pass. The atmosphere today, in fact, separates the waters below (ocean) from waters above (clouds and vapor). The straightforward interpretation by Timothy would probably not distinguish between stellar space and the atmosphere. But the context of day two, and our clear knowledge of astronomy requires the interpretation to be “atmosphere.” Timothy, on a cloudy day, could look up to the sky and say, “Yes, the atmosphere separates the oceanic waters below from the atmospheric waters above.” It was a simple everyday concept which we understand even today. Before the Flood, (if there was a water canopy) the atmosphere may have been much more water-saturated, or even had a different mode of suspension, but in any case, Timothy would have had no problem at all understanding the expanse as the familiar atmosphere—the air we breathe.]

v9. RH Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so. And God called the dry land earth and the gathering of the waters he called seas; and God saw that it was good.” [At this point the waters below have become the continent(s) and seas of our own planet. Therefore during creation week, *the earth was at or near the center of the universe*] (6,p71).

v9. GG Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered together in one place, and let the dry land appear,” and it was so. And God called the dry land earth and the gathering of the waters he called seas; and God saw that it was good. [This needs no comment except that Jonah’s statement, “Yahweh *made* the sea and the dry land” helps us understand the use of *made* in reference to the stars on day four. The end results of RH and GG are the same here, but the preconditions are visualized quite differently and the reference to the center of the universe is certainly not in the text.]

v14. RH Then God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God made two great lights ... the stars also. And God gave them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth. [Timothy sees the sun, moon and stars in the firmament (expanse). Early in the fourth morning, God finishes coalescing the material left

behind in the expansion, and thermonuclear fusion begins in the newly formed stars. During the fourth day, the distant stars age billions of years, while their light also has billions of years to travel here. While the light from the more distant galaxies is traveling to earth, space continues to expand, stretching the wavelengths of the light and thus shifting them toward the red side of the spectrum] (6,p78).

v14. GG Then God said, “Let lamps in the expanse of air be for separating the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and days and years; and let them be lamps in the expanse of air to give light upon the earth.” And it was so. And God brought forth two great lights ... the stars also. And God gave them in the expanse of air to give light on the earth. [Light ('owr) from the sun had been “given forth” into the atmosphere on day one, but the light sources (*ma'owr*) were not distinguishable due to some remaining obscurant cloud material. On day four, the light and the light source were visible through the transparent atmosphere and were, therefore, “given forth” into the expanse. This provided man with celestial markers for seasons and direction. Day four has nothing to do with the creation of the sun, moon and stars but the “making” or “bringing forth” of visible celestial markers. Days five and six continue the preparation of the biosphere for life, culminating in the creation of man. It is all pronounced “very good.”]

v20. RH And God said, “Let (the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures and let) birds fly around on the face of the expanse of heavens.” [The literal Hebrew reads “and birds let fly around over the earth on the face of the expanse of the heavens.” So the literal Hebrew doesn’t have “in the open expanse.” It doesn’t even have the preposition “in.” Instead it uses another preposition “al” which means “on, over, above” but not “in.” The passage literally says, “on the face of the expanse of the heavens.” ... So most of the atmosphere is merely at the surface of the expanse. Therefore the expanse itself must be something much bigger—such as interstellar space. Thus the only verse allegedly justifying the identification of the atmosphere with the whole expanse really supports the idea of the expanse being interstellar space!]

v20. GG And God said, “Let birds fly above the earth across the open expanse of air.” [The expanse is the air. The only place where birds have ever flown or will ever fly is the air—plain old air. Birds fly through it, over it, across it, above it, on it, in it and no place else. Dr. Humphreys literalizes the Hebrew expression in verse 20 as birds fly “on the face of the expanse of the heavens.” But the Hebrew *paniyim* is still another word with an enormous

range of meanings so, again, context must determine. The KJV has it right, "Let birds fly over the earth in the *open* firmament of heaven." New Century has it, "let birds fly in the air above the earth." The identical expression is used when birds were released "in the open field." Some could, perhaps, translate it "on the face of the field" but that is silly. The idea is the wide-open spaces of the field like the wide-open spaces of the air—the straightforward interpretation.]

Dr. Humphreys' interpretation of Genesis has been compared with the biosphere model, but other views could be substituted for comparison using the "Timothy principle." Readers are invited to position their own interpretations adjacent to mine for a comparison of straightforwardness, and then sit as judge and jury. Which is the most straightforward of all the proposed views using the original Hebrew language? The biosphere model could certainly be modified if a more straightforward view, which gives a coherent total picture with no scientific problems, clarifies any point.

BIBLICAL OBJECTIONS TO RELATIVISM

It is spoken reverently, that any of us with decent literary ability could have done a better job than the Holy Spirit did, if He had been trying to convey the picture Dr. Humphreys suggests. This is true of many interpretations of the Genesis narrative and suggests another touchstone from which to examine whether an interpretation is correct or not. If there is language in the original Hebrew text which we would not have chosen, or which is a bit annoying, or if we could easily have chosen better language ourselves, we have certainly missed the "meaning which God probably intended everybody to get." It is better to modify our view to suit the Scripture or abandon our view for a better one if we would have chosen other words. Just to pen the words "in context" does not prove we have taken the language in its context. (See RH on v3 p103.)

Dr. Schroeder makes an astute observation, "We all have an emotional stake in religion. Be it pro or con, our psyches will resist change in our perception of the Bible's meaning." (11,p20).

The truth of this concept may account for the many widely differing attempts which have been made to explain phenomena within a 6,000 year frame. How dextrous we become when an established theological position is threatened! Once again, no one is exempt from this peril.

The problem is common to all young-earth scenarios. In the case of relativism, the argument seems to read, "The universe is 6,000 years old, but please understand from another point of view, it is actually 10-15 billion." And similarly, according to Drs. Morris and Humphreys, the evening and morning of day one was utterly, extremely different from the evening and morning of day six. In this

scenario the words are forced to cover too much differing territory.

Dr. Humphreys cites Psalm 148:4, “Praise him, you heaven of heavens and you waters above the skies,” to support his view. (The preposition can mean “above” or “on high.”) The expression “heaven of heavens” simply means the highest heaven in David’s view, and “waters above” refers to the same waters that shrouded the primeval earth into darkness and were elevated to the “on high” position by the day two inflation of air. The Psalmist is imploring everything he knows about or can see to praise Yahweh.** He knew about the waters of Genesis 1:6-8 but neither he nor we know anything about waters 12 billion (or more) light years distant.

Even if the quantity of “water above” were ten times the volume of water below, held aloft by a supposed expanse 24 billion light years in diameter, only an occasional water molecule would be detectable. This assumes that an observer is available to measure it. Water outside the boundary of matter is essentially untestable and certainly meaningless to ordinary readers. God allowed us to discover galaxies, neutron stars, and quasars through our own investigation, without telling us about these wonders. Would He tell us about water beyond space even though it cannot be seen, tested, or is of any use to our knowledge? This is another example of Scripture twisting to accommodate a preconceived idea. No, the account of the six days focuses on the local biosphere, not the far reaches beyond space. The expanse is simply our atmosphere of air where birds fly.

Even if the expanse were the far reaches beyond space, a Timothy type person would say on an overcast day, “There is no sun or stars *in* the expanse today.” We know he would, do we not? Does this not show a fallacy in concluding a cosmic range for the expanse in Genesis 1? Besides, the “end of space” concept of the firmament for day two completely misses the important purpose of the six day work—to furnish the biosphere on an existing planet.

To repeat, the physics of Dr. Humphreys’ cosmology may be worthy of consideration from a purely scientific point of view, even though many qualified physicists are raising objections to it. But the cosmology itself and how he relates his system to Genesis is surely in error. The biblical basis for this theory is far from straightforward—rather bent backward. This model appears to be a modified big bang theory—with an attempt to relate it to the six days of Genesis 1. If Dr. Humphreys were to create a cosmology including relativism and apply it to verse 1 only (without forcing it on the biosphere work of the six days), the model could be entertained at least cautiously.

Dr. Humphreys embarked on his relativistic project to “solve the unsolvable,” but predicated it on a faulty paradigm—the assumption

** Psalm 108:4 reads, “Your mercy is great *above the heavens* and your truth reaches to the clouds.” Obviously, “above the heavens” and “to the clouds” are equivalent expressions.

tion that the Bible demands a young planet earth and universe. It comes as no surprise then that in his text the plain and simple, ordinary definitions of "heaven," "earth," "deep," and "expanse" are taken to such extremes.

The Lord left the discovery of the vastness of the universe to men and women who searched it. He did not spell out the astronomical wonders in the Bible. He also provided only limited cosmological information. Further inquiry should fall within the framework of Scripture—no more, no less. That puts the cosmological problems back where the astronomical problem has been—in the hands of astronomers. The speed-of-light problem is not a biblical problem. Properly interpreted, the Bible leaves the puzzle with the astrophysicists, just like the measurements of the universe have been. The Bible says nothing about the boundary distances of the universe, so we measure the best we can. The Bible also says nothing about the beginning boundary of time. Again, we should measure the best we can.

God knows well enough the age of the universe. If men differ in their estimates, some one is certainly mistaken. Who among us has not experienced the embarrassment of discovering an error that we have confidently promoted? We should be driven to our knees for guidance and humility.

The mere existence of Dr. Humphreys' relativism should point out to creationists that we have an unresolved problem. Ken Ham states, "If I were asked whether there were any major weakness in the creationist armor, I would have to admit that it has been (till now at least) in the area of cosmology." Mr. Ham would re-trench with Dr. Humphreys' relativism, but that leaves us with enormous speculation. Thus, the concept is not trustworthy and the weakness continues to exist. The burden of proof lies with relativists, not only regarding the center of mass but also precise timing of the supposed event horizon to suit 6,000 to 10,000 years of earth time.

If all the energy expended to prove a young universe has been spawned by a misinterpretation of Exodus 20:11 and Genesis 1:16, then all the products of that misdirected energy must be examined for validity. Imagine Ptolemy responding to a suggestion by Copernicus that the earth orbited the sun. They are separated by centuries, of course, but one can imagine Ptolemy thinking, "Give up my thirty years' work in the face of plainly observable facts? You gotta be kidding." It is never easy to see our efforts totter.

Gigantic pyramids were built because of a mistaken belief about death. Indeed, entire economic engines have developed from basic religious error. What a waste, but we are following the same principle if we build creation models to suit interpretive error. The

young earth dogma is precious and sacrosanct only because of faulty interpretation followed by spectacular intellectual gymnastics for support. All the proposed refuges devised to explain starlight are like the false prophets, “The vessels from the Lord’s house will shortly be brought again from Babylon”—promises without substance.

God chose to make a big universe. In so doing, He could allow us, today, to see into the far reaches of space by one of three options (at least). He could create light beams with moving images recorded of things which actually never happened. He could perform some sort of physical trick which would allow visibility of the actual events, in ways we do not understand. Or He could build the universe in place, and simply wait billions of years before He created angels, and then later, man and the biosphere. The Hebrew language and metaphors support the latter and leave us with no illusions. Relativism and the “mature creation” view are both illusory.

This book insists on an undefined biblical age for the universe but it also heavily favors an old age in consideration of factual physical evidence. Suppose physicists succeed in proving that the universe is young. The biblical interpretation presented here would not change, but the consideration of the factual evidence and the biased emphasis of this book would change drastically. Dr. Humphreys would surely be awarded the Nobel prize if he were the one to prove it and all of us would rejoice with him and the emphasis of this book might change. But at this point, creationists are weighed in the balances and found wanting for any proof of a young planet earth or a young universe, which leaves them with understandable concern.

Besides speed-of-light difficulties, several other chronometers need explanation including the Hertzsprung/Russell globular cluster method, the Doppler red shift method, and nucleo chronometry, only mentioned here without further comment. Starlight is only one of several difficulties for young earth devotees.

Dr. Humphreys is a gifted apologist. I applaud his desire to defend a literal Bible. But the entrenched view of the pioneering creationists, combined with some misleading translations, has led him, as so many others, far astray. A major, unprovable and incorrect assumption is that God created the stars on day four. Not so. God brought forth those bodies to the potential view of an observer on day four as he brought forth the dry land the day before. Both land and stars had already been created “In the beginning,” but obviously could not be seen until the ocean was depressed, in the case of land, or until the atmosphere was made fully transparent in the case of stars. This was the divine work of days three and four, permitting signs, seasons, days and years to be recorded.

Remove the assumption of star creation on day four and everything fits comfortably without forcing a word of Scripture and without any need for invoking clever devices and theories to explain very big problems. Dr. Humphreys' elaborate construct was required largely because of misinterpretation of the fourth day which gave rise to the young-earth doctrine.

Furthermore, Dr. Humphreys' interpretation, like that of many other expositors, leaves the origin of a firm planetary earth unrecorded and without description just as air is also unrecorded for those with that interpretation. These are inconceivable omissions in an inspired book of beginnings and it is firmly disallowed by the subtraction procedure described in chapter one.

If relativism fails, is there any other solid solution? Yes, indeed, and one which has no problems dogging it: *The universe is undefined in age*. Conversion to that simple understanding would solve all major problems of creationists. Complicated explanations are suspect if a simple one is viable, in accord with the well demonstrated Ockham's razor. Undefined age would also offer a beacon to progressive creationists and theistic evolutionists leading them out of the confusion created by unsupportable assertions of evolutionary long ages for biological development. When creationists abandon the mandatory young universe assumption, it will be much easier for these people to emerge from that deadly fog.

THE SETTERFIELD COMEBACK

Barry Setterfield with Trevor Norman published a paper, *The Atomic Constants, Light, and Time*, SRI International, August 1987, in which they examined the data for the measurements of the speed of light over the history of those measurements. They concluded that the speed of light is not a constant but has varied over time from a higher velocity to a lower. Setterfield has proposed a theory that light velocity has decayed from near infinity at the beginning of the universe to the rate presently observable today. This offered hope to creationists for explaining light from distant galaxies within the supposed maximum 10,000 year age of the cosmos.

With the advent of Humphreys' theory, creationists tended to doubt Setterfield, many opting instead for Humphreys. Eugene Chaffin, creationist physicist, published a paper in 1994, (*Proceedings of the International Conference on Creationism*, p143) in which he states that no significant difference in the speed of light has been measured since 1727.

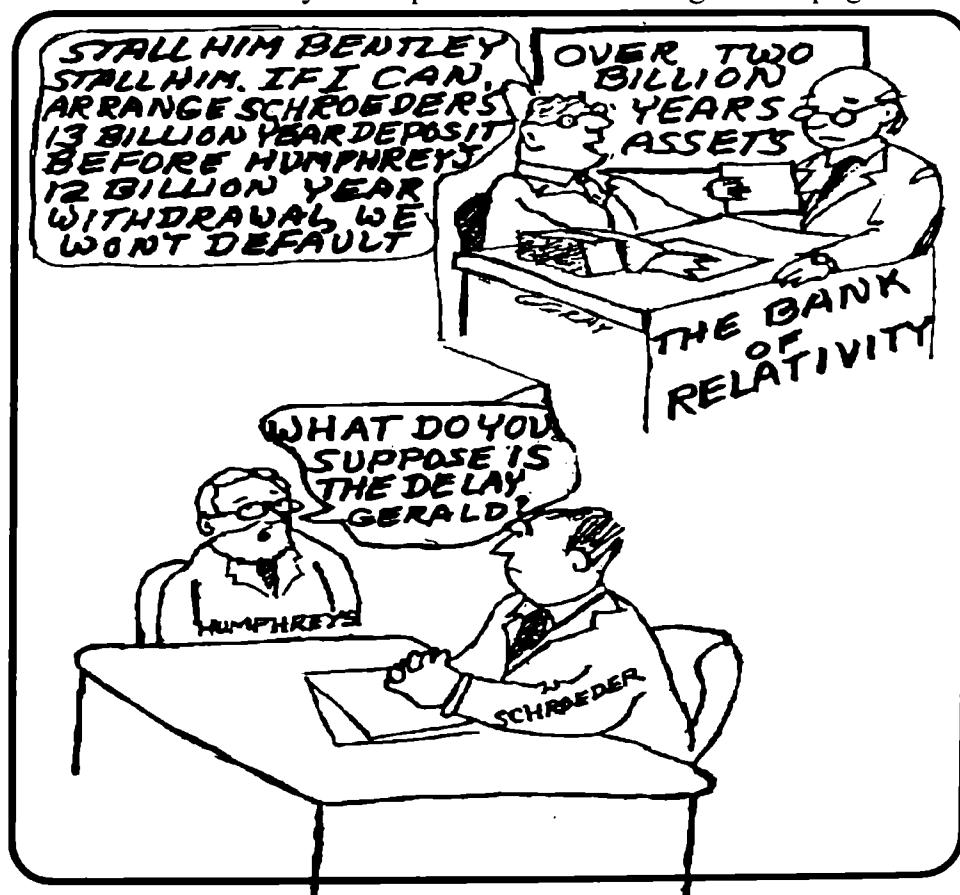
But with the growing opposition against Humphreys from peer reviews, and with Setterfield maintaining an impressive and comprehensive proposal, the favor may be moving in his direction once again. In my opinion, all of the attempted solutions by physi-

cists provide a red-herring distraction from the simple biblical solution offered in this book which is understandable to even children and satisfies every fact of science as well.

I am not qualified to have an opinion about Setterfield's theoretics, but even if the universe were *proven* to be exactly 6,006 years old, while we could welcome that proof, yet it would not change the Bible interpretation offered here. It does not alter the cloud of thick darkness established by God at the foundation of the earth; it does not alter use of "asah" and preferred translations for Genesis 1:16 and Exodus 20:11; it does not alter isotope ratios used for dating; in fact it would not alter anything offered in this book. The age of the universe is still undefined in the Bible.

Or if Setterfield were to *prove* that the age of the universe is exactly 804,201 years or some other number, all the problems for biblical literalists who interpret a young universe would remain unabated. My personal opinion is that no such proof will be forthcoming but it does not matter to the thesis of this book. However, it would certainly alter my probable-old-universe bias. An overview of his proposal written in lay terms has been posted at <http://Idolphin.org/setterfield/vacuum.html> and it is interesting reading.

A debate between Humphreys and me appeared in the Creation Research Society Quarterly, Sept. 2002 - March 2003 letters to the editor and may be requested free of charge. See page 3.



*Jack is almost pleading now, “I want to cooperate,
but I simply can’t go further. It just isn’t right.
Please listen to my reasons.”*

CHAPTER 8

OBJECTIONS TO AN UNDEFINED AGE ANSWERED

Some have thought that the New Testament reference to the marriage of Adam and Eve at the “beginning of creation” (Mark 10:2-9) forces the creation of the stellar heavens into the same time zone as the creation of the first parents. This deduction is predicated on the assumption that no time elapsed before the first day.

1. THE NEW TESTAMENT REFERS TO THE BEGINNING OF THE CREATION

We notice many “beginnings” in the Bible. “That which you heard from the beginning” (I John 1:1), and “carefully investigated from the beginning” (Luke 1:2), speak of two different beginnings: the beginning of Jesus’ birth and the beginning of His ministry. Wisdom says, “I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began” (Proverbs 8:22). Again, two beginnings, one well before the other.

Nothing in Jesus’ statement indicates a young earth. Adam’s beginning was the beginning of man’s creation, not the absolute beginning of the stars. Regarding marriage, it suits Jesus’ purpose perfectly that Adam and Eve represent the “beginning of creation.” This is the position they hold with respect to the human race. The secondary implication about creation is within the boundary of the primary context and the purpose of Jesus’ words. The creation of the solar system and the rest of the stellar wonders have no bearing on divorce.

Returning to the illustration of the Jews rebuilding the temple, one could say: “For in four years the temple was built,” (or “made” if you prefer) when the foundation waited for sixteen years before anything rose on it. Ezra 3 records, “[In 536 B.C.] Zerubbabel, Joshua and the rest *began* the work” on the temple. Then, a sixteen-year delay took place until Haggai prophesied. The same people then “*began* to work on the house of the Lord” (Haggai 1:13-15 NIV). Two beginnings occur in the work on the same temple. The “beginning” of the temple building occurred long after the absolute beginning of the temple foundation, just as the beginning of Adam came after the galaxies. Today, if we refer to the “beginning of Zerubbabel’s temple,” we would more logically imply 519 B.C. than 536 B.C., although either is correct. The NIV translators supplied the word “*began*” in Haggai, but there is no question of a new beginning. This holds true whether or not the actual word appears in the original text. The temple builders, in fact, began building twice, as the NIV indicates.

References to “prophets which have been since the world began” or “the blood of the prophets shed from the foundation of the world” are easily explained in the same way. Of course, the six days of work on the planet earth represent the beginning or foundation of the world. Peter speaks of the “world (*kosmos*) that perished.” However, we should not think that the universe has perished. A pre-Flood “world” perished, and it had a beginning—a foundation which is the foundation or beginning of that world. There was a “world that perished” (II Peter 3:6). Actually, one can safely assert that a creation perished, beginning with the third-day land formations—for the atmosphere did not perish in the Flood, nor did light perish from days one and two. If a world perished, then a creation perished, but in no case has the universe perished. Therefore, “the foundation of the world” or “the beginning of creation” do not refer to the absolute beginning of the universe in these passages.

The references in Luke 1:70 and Acts 3:21 use the word *aion* or “age.” Zechariah refers to “Prophets which have been since the age began,” that is, since the creation of men. “Blood of all the prophets shed from the foundation of the world (*kosmos*)” (Luke 11:50), is an accurate statement no matter how far one goes back in history, but the statement refers to Abel, shortly after the creation of man. Divorce was not allowed from the beginning of creation. That is factually true, also, no matter how far one goes back in pre-earth history, but also, refers to the creation of Eve—not creation of the cosmos.

If all that does not convince, then consider the great commission, “Preach the good news to every creation.” (The word for ** We are in the “end times” and “last days” and have been for 2000 years and we await even more time. So also “from the beginning” of creation can be a long time as long as it qualifies as the beginning activity.

creation, *ktisis*, is the same word used in Mark 1:0, “the beginning of creation.”) Jesus is not commanding us to preach to the trees or the moon or little kittens. We allow the context to limit the application of the words “every creation.” “Creation” in the context of preaching refers to people, not Andromeda’s M31 galaxy. “From the beginning of creation,” by the same token, is the beginning of Adam and Eve in the context of marriage (or the great tribulation in Mark 13:19). Andromeda’s galaxy would distract the issue.

Just as in the Flood context (II Peter 3:6), “The world that then was, perished,” does not imply that the entire universe has perished, so also in the marriage context, the “beginning of creation” does not announce the beginning of the universe.

Consider as well Mark 1:1: “The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. ... John came who baptized.” This defined the beginning of the gospel, but not absolutely. “For indeed we have had the gospel preached unto us just as they did” (Israel in the wilderness) (Hebrews 4:2). “And the scripture ... preached the gospel in advance to Abraham saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed” (Galatians 3:8).

The gospel “began” as soon as God clothed Adam and Eve in coats of skin and promised a coming Messiah, but it wasn’t fully implemented until Jesus’ ministry. So the beginning of the gospel was the “first gospel” proclaimed (Genesis 3:15) and the beginning of the gospel was also the baptism of John. The beginning of creation, as it relates to marriage, was Adam and Eve. The beginning of the galaxies was something else entirely.**

In 1948 the state of Israel came into being. We can say, “From the beginning of the state of Israel, tractors have been an important piece of equipment for its farmers.” However, tractors were unknown in Joshua’s day, when the state of Israel absolutely began. The context limits this beginning to 1948—not Joshua’s day. From the beginning of creation, divorce was not allowed. The context limits that beginning to Adam and Eve.

2. LIMITATIONS OF GOD’S POWER IMPLIED

One critic suggests that the concept of God waiting for untold eons before inaugurating the six-day activity makes Him “subject to, or the prisoner of His own created physics.” It would appear to my friend that God is limited in that case.

It seems reasonable that God might have wanted Adam and everyone after him to witness light that was genuinely generated by the appearing object, actual and real, not virtual or pre-encoded in specially created beams. God exists outside His creation and it matters nothing to Him to “wait” ten billion years (“wait” is a word that helps *us* understand, not that it imposes any restriction

on God.)

His desire that we should witness real, actual radiation generated by quasars and galaxies, rather than pre-encoded images, possibly motivated the time delay. What could it hurt to have a twelve-billion-year time delay? For God, it is the same as no delay at all. Humans are bewildered, thinking about subjects beyond mortal grasp, but certainly nothing in God constrains Him to hurry about anything.

God is not a prisoner of His physical laws. Of course, He could (if He chose) create light with images pre-encoded, but it doesn't seem like a thing He would do, for this implies that He works with illusions. Then physical observations, including historical events like novas, pulsars and innumerable celestial novelties are also illusory and unreal. Illusion and non-reality do not characterize a God of truth. Surely, He does not have to mislead us, especially when twelve billion years is nothing to Him. He may have planned the "wait" for our sakes so we can see *reality in progress*, not pre-encoded images or some explanation that is understandable only to physicists. Why bother to make any "real" thing at all when 99.9% of the universe will never fall within the narrow band of 8000 man-viewable years? The "new heavens" will be here long before the first (real) universe could even be observed.

3. THE LIMITED GLORY OF THE FIRST DAY OF LIGHT QUESTIONED

Another critic wondered about the view of the first day, when God commanded, "Let there be light." He had visualized darkness throughout creation, followed by a mighty cosmic-wide blast of radiation on the first day. Limiting the zone of darkness to the surface of the ocean with the remainder of the universe illuminated was disappointing to him.

Actually, this proposal diminishes nothing. That mighty cosmic-wide blast of radiation, with all its glory, indeed occurred in the distant past when the heavens were created. But here, once again, the earth-centric view point must be honored and directs the meaning. If we contemplate that pure and perfect light, which dispelled age-long darkness on the ocean of day one, it should remind us every day of our dependence on that life-giving glory and inspire us to return gratitude to our faithful Creator. All the glory remains, unabated. Man views this glory from the surface of the earth. We don't want a meltdown, just daily life-sustaining light.

Light radiated from the stars as soon as God created them. No matter what radiation filled the cosmos, and no matter how long it may have been shining throughout creation, it was excluded from the surface of the ocean until God did something about that thick

cloud of darkness. Multiply the radiation of the sun by seven and the “face of the deep” would still be in darkness as long as an opaque cloud enshrouded it. We may not understand the physics of how the cloud produced such thick darkness but it is clear that in Egypt God accomplished a “darkness that could be felt” on that portion of the earth and something like it occurred when the Lord died. Also, “a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness” (Zephaniah 1:15) will precede His coming again. That leaves us with no doubt that the primeval ocean could have been equally dark or darker from the “swaddling clothes” of thick darkness described in Job. Egypt endured 72 hours identical to the dark conditions which may have continued for ages before the first day. “I clothe the heavens with blackness” (Isaiah 50:3). Egypt should give us pause before we insist that the creation of the heavens was integral with day one. If Egypt could experience total darkness for three days, the primeval earth could experience total darkness for as long as God chose to leave it that way—even megayears.

4. SUPERNOVAS NOT OLDER THAN THE CURSE

One objector suggests that the universe could not be old because supernovas and decaying orbits represent a dying universe which could not have occurred before the curse and therefore the universe is not older than Adam’s curse.

“How are you fallen from heaven O, Day Star, son of the morning.” Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 speak of earthly kings but expositors relate both passages typically to the fall of Satan (possibly long before Adam). After all, 30 million angels fell after Satan. Scripture does not elaborate, but local cosmological anomalies probably came after the great cosmological fall of Satan.

“The word was made flesh and *tabernacled* among us” (John 1:14). Even though the perfect Son of God came in a world of entropy and partook of it, God’s permanent plan involved resurrection to a new physical regime. Had our parents never sinned, this transformation would have taken place like the glorification of our Lord followed His resurrection. Tents (tabernacles) are temporary dwelling places, the Temple represents the permanent. The new heavens and the new earth will house resurrected, deathless, perfect bodies and spirits. The old heavens and earth performed a temporary purpose.

The six day work is pronounced “very good” but a devil had been created probably long before the six day work. He was going strong by the time of the temptation in the garden and one third of the angelic hosts had fallen with him before that. The work of the six days was all very good but evil had been allowed outside of that time zone. Cursed is the *ground* for your sake. The heavens (at

least in the solar system realm) were cursed with the fall of Satan earlier. As perfect Jesus was allowed to enter the imperfect world to fulfill the purpose of God, so Adam was allowed into a universe where Satan roamed to fulfill the purpose of God. The new heavens and a redeemed human race were in the works even before the fall.

Supernovas are stupendous fireworks but I see no reason to conclude that cosmic explosions represent anything out of God's original (temporary) plan. Supernovas and galactic collisions are fun to watch from a safe distance and may not represent anything of a curse. Local impact craters are curse related. All material creation now visible is temporary. The new heavens will be permanent.

5. EVIDENCES FOR A YOUNG EARTH

Someone will ask, "What do you do with all the evidence for a young earth which is currently being demonstrated?" The simple answer is, "If the Bible is silent on that subject, then may the person with the best established science prevail." We can be totally comfortable with either old or young data. Most of the young-earth evidence relates to post-Flood geology, so my theme does not disagree with young ages for the universal Flood and its consequences.

This has been a source of confusion when discussing the issues for many are tempted when they hear "old universe" to equate that automatically with fossils millions of years old. Dr. John Morris, president of the Institute for Creation Research, says, "If the old earth is true, then Christianity is not true. They cannot both be true." (Science, Scripture and Salvation radio broadcast, November 14th, 1999) But he was assuming that "old earth" meant an old biosphere and an old fossil record as well. We may fully concur that the fossil record is the result of the Genesis Flood and is recent but we need not accept a mandatory young *universe* or planet earth. Biblical and scientific evidence does not allow such conjecture.

We may not limit the stellar heavens to an origin within the six day framework. From there on let us learn from zircon crystals, speed-of-light analyses, polonium haloes, galaxy rotations, rings of Saturn, helium accumulations, a shrinking sun, isotope ratios, supernova remnants, comet life, cosmic dust accumulation, decaying magnetic fields, surface erosion features on terrestrial bodies, limitations of direct parallax measurements and such. We must not jump to conclusions until they are *established* science. We would do well to remember the cold fusion chaos, when chemists made spectacular claims that can not be supported by peer review and repeatability even today.

Accordingly, we offer no conclusions in the following conjecture, but include some wide ranging speculations to help us out of

young-universe thinking ruts. This will require indulgence from readers because the speculations come from a nonscientist and with little supporting data. These are just hypotheses—coffee table speculations needing better authority. It matters little if the postulates offered here are right or wrong. The purpose is to introduce ideas which will question young-universe assertions made in areas outside of geology. Alternative explanations should always be considered, and if an investigator is not locked into a particular time frame, he can think freely without concern that his time frame may be in jeopardy.

Young-universe creationists assert that if our galaxy were very old, there would be much more evidence of supernova remnants based on an average rate of production (one in 25 years although none has occurred for 300 years in our galaxy). But can we with certainty extrapolate into the past, based on today's data, when we may be unaware of cosmic factors which may produce considerable variation? If the universe is only 10,000 years old, and supernovas are caused when stars exhaust their fusion fuel, then did the first supernova take place 25 years after creation? More probably they had a tank full of fuel at creation. The star, which ran out of fusion fuel at 1054 A.D. (historically observed supernova) may have been one of the early ones, leaving its remnants visible today. With a young universe, if *some* are running out of fuel, we would expect *many* stars begin to run out about now, giving a progressively accelerating detonation rate making the "average" meaningless.

But this same principle, easily understood for a young universe, can be applied to an old universe just as well. We cannot be sure that supernovas have always detonated at the present rate. Perhaps, as the universe matures, supernova activity increases, even exponentially, because of that very maturity. This principle is illustrated by popcorn maturing in the heat, with quickly-increasing detonation rates, an early detonation (possibly) being 1054. We creationists object to evolutionist extrapolations which assume geological rates to be the same throughout history—what about our own extrapolations? Can anyone prove that a "popcorn theory" of supernovas is incorrect or impossible? If not, let us not conclude from a limited knowledge base.

Some creationists say that comet life, which cannot last more than about 200 solar revolutions due to disintegration each revolution, disproves an old universe. True or false? Consider an alternative idea (certainly not a researched theory). An asteroid belt orbits between Jupiter and Mars. Suppose the asteroids originated from the breakup of a former planet, due to an enormous collision with a foreign object, perhaps an interstellar missile. A broken-up planet has been suggested by many theorists (disputed but not disproven)

although others say that no coherent body ever existed there. The total mass remaining constitutes only a fraction of our moon's mass.

Suppose that a head-on impact came from a single object that orbited in the approximate median of all presently observed cometary orbits. Also, suppose that this took place about five or six thousand years ago, just before Noah's Flood, precisely directed by the hand of God like the archer "drew his bow at random and hit the King of Israel (Ahab) between the sections of his armor" (I Kings 22:34-38). That "random" arrow fulfilled Elijah and Micah's prophecy to precision, directed by the ruler of the universe so the dogs licked up Ahab's blood in Naboth's vineyard.

The intruding missile could have been composed of the same material which some theorize comprises Callisto, mostly ice with a small rocky and metallic core. After impact, debris would be strewn all over the solar system, almost all of it ending in the sun or Jupiter—the rest creating the ubiquitous impact craters and what little remains of the asteroid belt. Asteroid Eros looks like a ten mile long, thin splinter of rock. Could a head-on crash reduce velocities sufficiently to de-orbitize many of the fragments?

The impact storm may have occurred in one grand episode with yearly smaller episodes, as planetary orbits coincided with the main debris stream. The intruding body would also disintegrate but much or most of its divided mass would continue in roughly the same orbit, just as the asteroid belt continues in roughly its parent's former orbit. So we would have the comets today, remnants of an exploded body with a severely diminished life span.

It would be interesting to plot all the orbits of the comets to see if there is some correlation. Presumably this has been done, but the results must be analyzed with this conjecture in mind, allowing for local capture of many into short period orbits. Possible methods of falsification of such ideas might be cited—fuel for clever astrophysical research specialists. Obviously, if the asteroid parent planet were fragmented, only an extremely powerful mechanism could accomplish disintegration. Planets don't just blow up for no reason at all. Such an event requires energy on an enormous scale.

The postulated intruder probably had a very large elliptical orbit (as the comets do now), or it may have been interstellar. Could the giant red spot on Jupiter be residual to swallowing a large segment of its neighboring planet? Was this planet or a fragment, caromed out of its orbit about 6,000 years ago, destined for Jupiter?**

Admittedly, this is speculation of a high degree, but are there better conjectures proposed? The Bible does refer to a "day star fallen from heaven" (Isaiah 14:12), an allusion to the King of Babylon and typically Satan, but one which could also have a literal celestial

** NASA scientists are now postulating an asteroidal impact in Mars' history which precipitated volcanic activity and unleashed the devastating regional flooding abundantly evident on that planet. This was reported in the popular media in October of

antecedent (like a literal plague of locusts presaged a national condition in Israel in the book of Joel).

The moon has overlapping impact craters, and meteoric dust covers everything. Perhaps the solar system remained relatively free of dust until the asteroids were blasted from a parent body, filling the solar system with dust and debris for a time. Perhaps the asteroidal impacts chiefly occurred just before the Flood roughly five or six thousand years ago and possibly triggered that cataclysm in the will of God. This could account for the limited cosmic dust on the moon which is interpreted by some young-earth people to be less than 20,000 years of accumulation. Again it is a mistake to assume dust accumulation has been uniform over long ages. That 20,000 year limit, however, has been shown to be grossly in error by creationists Snelling and Rush in an exhaustive study of the evidence, *Creation Ex Nihilo Technical Journal*, vol. 7 (1993, No. 1) :2-42.

We believe that the Flood came to pass by the direct hand of God: "I, even I do bring a flood of waters upon the earth" (Genesis 6:13-17). Therefore, it is credible to consider a precise impact or impacts upon the earth as well as an antecedent impact creating the asteroids, especially if one event provides a plausible explanation of many other facts in the package. A precisely directed impact is easy to accept if the directing agent is God.

Why would God use an asteroid or some other mechanism and not merely show His face and demolish His adversaries? Well, firstly, an asteroid is just a guess, nothing certain at all. We can be certain that *something* happened to our planet on a global scale. Perhaps God did use a physical means because He is a "God who hides Himself" (Isaiah 45:15). Perhaps He chose to use some natural mechanism (supernaturally directed) because faith operates well when there is no outward proof of God's hand but when evidence comes from the certain perception of His trustworthy character—physical evidence being absent. The *evidence* which faith uses is to know what kind of a God He really is—and then to trust in that knowledge, and to act on that knowledge. God does not write new, literal messages in the sky every morning. He wants to "hide Himself" from a sheer display of His power so that we learn to know Him as a trustworthy friend, thus beginning the reversal of that great Edenic tragedy of mistrust. Overt power does not beget trust. Overt love from a God who died to rescue his enemies begets lavish love and trust.

Did a celestial impact really take place? Probably not in the manner stated here, but plenty have. The Yucatan discovery was "late Flood"—but the actual cause of the Flood may have impacted the ocean or is buried beneath Cambrian strata.

1998. These horrendous floods on Mars provide still more credibility of the Genesis record for earth history and tend to support the impact theory as a cause of the Flood. Some think Venus has been completely resurfaced.

The purpose here is to get young-universe people to open up to alternative views. Those who don't like this idea are welcome to think of better ideas. There are many alternatives.

Helium accumulations must be addressed also. Some suggest that due to radioactive disintegration, much more helium should be measurable in the atmosphere if we have an old earth.

At one time in earth's history, before the first day, a blanket of darkness shrouded the planet (Job 38). No atmosphere or firmament existed then as we now enjoy. Could helium, being lighter than air, have percolated through the "waters that were above" and accumulated above this opaque blanket? If so, it may have encountered a hot upper layer which evicted helium at much higher rates than today. Surely, today's transparent atmosphere is colder than the energy-absorbing blanket of darkness.

This idea would be difficult to test except in laboratory simulations. It is offered to help creationists think of alternatives to a young universe. Surely, several possible explanations may account for the helium density.

The relation of isotope disintegration to neutrino flux densities is not well understood, but clearly neutrino concentrations vary. No one knows what disintegration rates would be if, in the original creation, the neutrino density stayed close to zero, then increased to high intensity at the Flood. Would post-Flood fission tracks be increased? This is another speculation for physicists to examine.

Someday isotope dating may become a useful tool when numerous unwarranted assumptions are removed from the calculations. It has been shown conclusively that Argon used for dating lava flows can survive the magma phase during eruption so the mix is clearly *not* set to zero as often assumed. We end up partly dating the earth, not the eruption, thus compromising the procedure mortally. (See Andrew Snelling, ICC 1998 Proceedings page 503ff.)

Young-universe creationists say that the stars could not be millions of years old, because some burn with such intense brightness that they would have burned out long before today. This can be answered with Revelation 8:12 and 16:8 (the sun darkened in chapter 8 and men were scorched with great heat in chapter 16 showing wide variations in intensity over brief time periods). This ought to discourage us from making uniformitarian assumptions about the brightness of stars. There is historical evidence from several sources that 1,700 years ago, Sirius was a red star. Today Sirius B is a white dwarf after only a few centuries.

Some say that if the universe were old we should see new stars "blinking on" if the light has just now arrived. No one knows if even Hubble has reached the remotest galaxy and those it does image look like tiny needles on a great field. Galaxies are 100,000

light years in diameter and perhaps thousands of light years thick. Five hundred years from now, we could perhaps see a tiny fraction more of that “blinking on” galaxy if we had a better than Hubble telescope. The idea of new stars blinking on is founded on weak astronomy.

Commitment to certain theories can be destructive to scientific inquiry in the same way that evolutionary assumptions close the minds of their supporters. When one’s mind is liberated from a mandatory young-universe mind-set, there is greater potential for discovery. Think what a really qualified scientist, when released from the prison of preconceptual error, could accomplish for creationism from a more accurate biblical perspective!

These examples are cited partly to show how freely one can work with ideas that show either old or young universe when age limits are undefined. A young-universe devotee may encounter data which appear contradictory and be constrained in his thinking by the prevailing orthodoxy.

Sum up all the supposed evidence for a young universe including examples not mentioned here. All the evidence does not approach the significance presented by the stubbornly resistant fact of light from distant galaxies. That is nearly incontrovertible evidence for an old universe and perfectly in harmony with Genesis. All the supposed indicators of a young universe are inconclusive and minor, small time considerations, when compared with the gigantic, impregnable fortress of starlight and time which cries, “Old universe.”

We are properly repelled by the theory of evolution, a concept which requires an old universe with an old geology, but we ought not to react by requiring a young universe if the Scriptures have not defined its youth.

6. A COSMOLOGY IMAGINED TO MEET OBJECTIONS

We will now propose an abbreviated cosmology within a biblical framework. First, a word of caution.

“He spoke and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast” (Psalm 33). Let us remember that it took eight “God said’s” just to get through the work on the biosphere (the six days of Genesis). Therefore we ought not put God in a box and tell Him all of His creation had to be done with one big “God said” for instant completion of the universe. Of course, He could have done so, had He chosen to or He might have chosen otherwise. God, having *said* something indicates that the work accomplished not only is *created* but that it also has *meaning, a message, a speech, a revelation*.

Peter talks of a yet future fulfillment of the same word of God which created the world. This fulfillment, however, is “kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment” (II Peter 3:7). That, obviously, hasn’t happened yet. Will we allow God to speak and then to reserve fulfillment for the proper time?

God created planet earth barren and desolate, but He did not complete it instantly. Could it be that God created the heavens in phases, long before the six days—a series of “God said’s” like the eight “God said’s” of the six days, separated by time between each fiat? The six days of Genesis I proceeded consecutively in 24 hour intervals (or near that). God does not give us details about the stellar creation, only its result. No human can tell God that He must do it in a certain way. With that, hear the “big internal bubble” speculation. I repeat the disclaimer, these are only conjectures.

First, God created the outermost filaments and groups of galaxies (perhaps 10 to 15 billion years ago *ex nihilo*). Then He waited around (doing other interesting things) for “x” million years, when He created a second bubble series just inside the first one (or it may have been a continuous creation from the outside of universe inward). He continued this “x” million-year cycle before creating the next inner galactic groups until the innermost walls of galaxies were finished. This may leave the universe with a center somewhere. (Maybe some clever physicist can figure out that such a creation process would exert a temporary repulsive effect gravitationally which made an accelerating, expanding universe if, indeed, the expanding universe is real and not illusory.)

Somewhere in that time frame, He created angels and many interesting things that we probably don’t know about. Also in that time frame, maybe towards the end of it, He created planet earth. The earth may have had some radioactive elements in it and polonium 218 inclusions in granite, we cannot be sure. Then He just hung around and relaxed like a brooding, hovering hen at night until sometime less than 8,000 years ago He began work on one specific planet for six of that planet’s days. The rest is history. (End “far out” cosmology.)

The conjecture of “x” million-year cycles of creation is made because some astronomers tell us that no matter what distance the galaxies measure from us, the spirals appear approximately similar, indicating the same age appearance. This is what one would expect from an *ex nihilo* creation done in cycles as described (or progressively from the outside in) with just enough time to bring the spiral’s appearance to their present configuration. Other astronomers tell us that older galaxies tend to join together in a different form than younger ones, which would modify our speculation. Others theorize that large quantities of cold, dense matter keep the spirals intact for

long ages. However, by the “big internal bubble” mechanism, first light from anciently created quasars could arrive on earth at near the same time as first light from more recently created nearby galaxies. Can we know, if given enough time, spiral galaxies will turn into ellipticals and then regenerate the spiral arms?

Big bang people reason that since the universe is expanding now, that implies a super-energetic point of origin by extrapolation. They always want to imagine a mechanism that precedes the result. But *if we are dealing with a Creator capable of miracles* there is no reason for that. No credible natural mechanism can be imagined for Joshua’s long day and no causal mechanism need be devised for a miracle universe. He might have created things directly in their present state or some condition antecedent to the present state. It is useless to apply the laws of physics to any miracle.

A “big internal bubble” origin of matter, taking place slow enough to allow us to see all the galaxies in their range of maturities from this narrow slot of human history, is one of many possible miracles. If the outer galaxies are older appearing than inner ones then adjust the creation speed accordingly (or devise a better idea).

Did it really happen as pictured here? Probably not, but it doesn’t matter. The only sure thing in our view is that the age of the universe is not limited to 10,000 years in the Bible record. Verse 1 does not elaborate on *how* God created the heavens nor does it tell us how much time it required. Genesis 1:1 may have involved multiplied ages by itself even before earth’s “brooding” time of verse 2.

If we as creationists can believe that Venus has been shrouded in thick clouds for megayears, and can project the possibility of millions of years of yet future clouds, then we should be able to accept millions of years of total darkness *before* day one on earth.

Some might register concern, “That sounds like progressive creation and leaves one open to an evolutionary interpretation.” The answer is that if no terrestrial life is “allowed” before the third day (defined at less than 8,000 years ago), evolution cannot be crammed into that time frame. Evolution couldn’t happen even if the earth were 900 trillion years old! The sequence of God’s creation is not revealed until the “first day.” To determine the length of time before day one, we can only study science and take a guess.

The biosphere concept of Genesis 1, aided by a healthy dose of Flood geology, brings the entire creation story into a clear focus. All the major objections are answered—everything fits. It is hoped that day-age people, theistic evolutionists, gap theory people, progressive creation devotees and others like them will be persuaded to abandon ideas which attempt to accommodate evolutionary errors and geological time assumptions and will be enticed to see the simple solution which solves all of creationist’s major problems with-

out stretching anything.

How liberating to discover that evolution theory is not driven by hard science at all but rather philosophical assumptions with futile attempts to marshal science for support. Mutations are assumed to be the driving force of evolution but not a single mutation has been documented which has resulted in a *net increase* in complexity!! Evolution requires trillions upon trillions of them and it would take dozens just to transform fruit fly "A" into superior fruit fly "B." This makes the issue nothing less than sinister. The serpent of the garden of Eden "has blinded the minds of them that believe not" and he is surely at work to have succeeded injecting such a preposterous concept into several generations of brilliant scientists and educators.

Many theistic evolutionists and progressive creationists cannot and will not listen to biblical, Flood geology because it appears to them they must accept a young universe in a package deal. No way will they accept an 8000 year old universe just as creationists cannot and will not accept evolution. Neither side will budge because each has a partial truth which, when combined with associated errors, reduces the controversy to perpetual deadlock to the delight of a wicked devil. It is all unnecessary.

THE DECEPTIVE HITCHHIKER

In September of 1976, *National Geographic* published a report entitled, "Seven Giants Who Led the Way," a history of men who contributed to the discovery of DNA structure. Pasteur and Morgan each received a page. Watson and Crick were awarded one half page each, but Darwin was heralded with two full pages. As we reflect on these men, six of them did, indeed, provide genuine scientific contributions to our knowledge of genetics, but did Darwin? Actually, what he contributed was a great deal of confusion. Ideas, yes—most of them impossible. He contributed very little hard, useful scientific evidence relating to genetics, but he earns two pages in *National Geographic* in a report about DNA! This example shows how evolution succeeds by *hitchhiking* on good science. Darwin's theory displays all the characteristics of fact-free science fiction, the fantasies of men now firmly institutionalized in Academe. This characterization serves as a background for what follows in the next chapter.

"No offense, Jack, but trust us,
 we can't stop for you to explain
 again when our map is so plain.
 Please don't go back
 or you will get lost."

CHAPTER 9

THEISTIC EVOLUTION PROMOTED BY MANDATORY YOUNG UNIVERSE DOCTRINE

Acacophony of voices offers ideas about origins. The concern of this chapter is the effect that the misinterpretation of Genesis has made on sincere people to constrain a belief in theistic evolution or progressive creation by reaction to young-universe creationism (thus adding to the cacophony).

Many good books are available which demolish the logic of simultaneous belief in God and chance evolution so I am relieved of that duty by reference to those works. Two books by Phillip Johnson are essential reading as starters. They are *Darwin on Trial*, and *Defeating Darwin*, (15 and 27 in the bibliography). Theistic evolutionary people who have a problem with supposed conflicts with geology or paleontology should read Dr. Harold Coffin's book, *Origin by Design* (21). Another well documented book is *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture* by Ariel Roth. It deserves the highest recommendation—a masterful work and *must reading* for anyone in the creation/evolution controversy (28). The creationist, catastrophist view of geology is actually far superior to the evolutionary view in explaining the facts of geology and paleontology. For a general apologetic see Dr. Thomas Kindell's book, *Evolution on Trial With Evolutionists on the Witness Stand* (49), a general compendium of creationist arguments (and evolutionist testimony of their own misgivings). No attempt will be made at duplicating the arguments here but some observations about the *reaction principle* are appropriate.

Dr. Hugh Ross represents many as he promotes a progres-

sive view of creation and what many creationists would regard as a theistic evolutionary concept. He attempts to harmonize the assertions of evolutionary geology and biology with the Bible, which simply cannot be done without stretching the language of Genesis. Dr. Ross, with multitudes of misinformed followers, has excessive faith in the pronouncements of the evolutionist establishment regarding anthropology and paleontology and a necessary consequence brings a parallel reduction of faith in the plain word of God. Instantly, “day” necessarily becomes “age,” “evening and morning” take on meanings far from standard. Language can be made to signify most anything if we abandon ordinary meanings of simple words in unambiguous contexts (13, p46).

If long geological ages actually occurred, then Genesis omits a major portion of the creation story. Any reader of this book could have produced a better description of events than the inspired prophets gave us, if a global Flood did not produce the fossil record. What kind of revelation would that be which misses most of the important history? Two problems are evident. One is interpretation of the geological column and the other is its twin—interpretation of the Bible. Until they match in harmony, the orchestra is out of tune.

Dr. Ross does believe in fiat creation of general kinds of life forms in ages past and he has some good insights but he accepts death and struggle over millions of years with development of species over vast periods of time—an unhealthy accommodation of evolutionary assumptions. What is the source of this view of science with its inevitable slant upon Scripture?

Some emotional words follow about evolution and, by implication—evolutionists. Like so many creationists, I was once an evolutionist, so that which follows can hardly project ill will. If language like “fake credibility, groundless assumptions and preposterous hypotheses” are used, it is with concern and understanding—and with grief. There is not one ounce of rancor, not an ounce of personal animosity. Nevertheless, the following assertions express my true feelings regarding evolution theory, theistic or otherwise.

Evolution is science fiction. Millions of years of biology exist only in the imaginations of men and their books. There is enough evidence in one’s fingernail or a peanut shell to prove the existence of a purposeful Designer. Spontaneous generation *never* occurs in any ordered system, whereas spontaneous dissolution of ordered systems occurs constantly. Evidence is not the problem. Blindness is the problem. Evolution hitchhikes on science. It contributes nothing, but gets a free ride at science’s expense, clothed, so to speak, in a scientist’s white coat and pictured against a background of test tubes and electronic apparatus. With fake credibility in the language of good science and the groundless assumption of enormous geologic time, evolution has gained a *religious* monopoly in academic life. It is a preposterous hypothesis, carried along by good,

established science, free of charge. The “veil cast over all nations” has deluded even brilliant minds to reject the obvious and embrace the ridiculous, hence academe is saturated with philosophical naturalism—a fairy tale for intellectuals. As Absalom succeeded in deceiving the masses of Israel (“the conspiracy was strong”) so evolution theory has gained an intense grip on the academic world based entirely on fiction. A deluded mind has led astray (Isa.44:20).

This is not to say that evolutionists never provide any good contributions to science. When they keep within their fields of research (outside of mythological religion) they frequently produce useful work. But as soon as they assert claims about geological ages or evolutionary mechanisms without providing factual proof, they work not as scientists, but as speculative religionists. Evolution is fact-free “science.” Satan has long employed the device of using truth to peddle falsehoods. Every liar knows that principle. Liars make lies look like truth. So does evolution, housed in a museum of science with a cadre of lettered devotees, what better sales device with which to hawk a religious fiction?

Poisonous snakes are dangerous because of what comes out of their mouths. Satan is pictured as a serpent because of his lethal mouth which has brought about the death of the human race. He brought about the death of the Savior as well by lying to the religious, political and intellectual world. (Jesus’ accusation was written in letters of Hebrew, Latin and Greek—representing the religious, political and intellectual cultures, respectively.) But, happily, when Satan sank his fangs in the Savior’s heel his head was instantly crushed by that wounded heel. The resurrection instantly established his doom as inevitable and he will be crushed under our feet shortly (Genesis 3:15, Romans 16:20). Meanwhile that lethal mouth is compounded in the mouths of preachers and philosophers who are inspired by the same devil. “The conspiracy is strong.” It is a conspiracy because it involves a supernatural, lying spirit operating through multitudes of his articulate converts just as the lying spirit enticed Ahab. (See I Kings 22:19-22)

Most people who teach evolution are not intentional deceivers. Some are good people by human standards who sincerely believe what they teach, without knowing that the whole notion was invented by the father of lies. Darwin himself was probably a dupe. Most courses in geology are 98 percent good science and are promoted by well-meaning teachers. However, a 2 percent solution of poison can be lethal. That lethal 2 percent is the interpretation of the fossil record, and the assignment of dates to that record.

Theistic evolution attempts to marry a tiger to a lamb. To insist that the entire cosmos was created during six days tends to promote the marriage of tiger and lamb because of an understandable reaction. That perverted marriage receives encouragement because of what we call the “package principle.” If the universe,

sun, moon and stars are in fact, old, it is very proper that people *not* believe that they are young. The evidence for old heavens is quite convincing—nearly incontrovertible. But because many prominent creationists are deeply committed to a young universe, many questioners are tempted to reject biblical creationism in the package, because they are forced to reject the young-universe concept. From there it is an easy step to accept theistic evolution. These potential believers reject a young universe on very persuasive scientific grounds, and accept evolution without good supporting evidence as a result.

Erroneous assumption that the creation of sun, moon and stars did not occur until day four, provides even further propulsion toward theistic evolution. The day four assembly of the universe is such a preposterous suggestion to the mind of the average reader that it is no surprise that some are diverted to evolutionary cosmology. Earth before universe is like building the roof before the foundation. To remove this one anomaly could restore biblical credibility.

We have a moral obligation to all men to remove any obstacle in the path of truth, including groundless, dogmatic interpretations. Theistic evolutionists or progressive creationists like Davis Young, P.T. Pun, Hugh Ross, Glenn Morton and many like them, may have been driven to this point by compelling astronomical evidence (The Fingerprint of God 4,pp155-158), feeling obliged to accept evolutionary geological assumptions by association. Could the freedom allowed by an undefined biblical origin of the heavens have steered these men to a healthier position as regards evolution? Possibly so.

Philip Johnson, Michael Behe, William Demski and the intelligent design people are reluctant to commit to a clear biblical creationism in public possibly because of its association with a mandatory young universe. They know that to mention Bible in the Academy is to turn people off (thanks in part to the young universe doctrine) so they accept the paralysis which that brings. It is understandable why they have taken that position to extend their influence, but it can hardly be appraised as “declaring the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:27). Still they have made some great contributions in ridding the field of naturalistic obstacles.

Multitudes have a vague feeling about the truth of Scripture but cannot square everything scientifically, especially when assaulted by university professors heaping ridicule and pseudo-scientific indoctrination upon them. Demanding a young universe is, therefore, extremely damaging and totally unnecessary.

Augustine’s centuries-old advice could help us here, “If something in the Scriptures seems to be absurd ... either the codex is faulty or the translator erred or you have not understood it.” It is natural for the average inquiring mind to regard a young universe as

absurd, given the speed of light and the dimensions of the cosmos. Let us consider the probability that we have not understood Exodus 20:11 and Genesis 1 correctly, lest we continue to lure those inquiring minds toward theistic evolution.

Theistic evolution is a gross idolatry when it portrays God as creator through death, struggle, tooth, claw, grief and the survival of the brutist. God is implicated because He invented it, if indeed evolution has occurred by these awful means. On the contrary, the miseries of history are a consequence of our great rebellion against God in the garden (Romans 8:20-22 and Isaiah 11:1-9). They were never a tool of creation and to think so is an offense to Jesus Christ, the Creator, who is love incarnate and who pronounced the creation “very good.”

Is the regime of kill or be killed, warfare and wounds, the triumph of the strongest and most ruthless, is that “very good?” Or could “very good” be better depicted by Isaiah 11:6, “the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, says Yahweh?” Isaiah 65:25 adds, “the wolf and the lamb shall feed together... and dust shall be the serpent’s food.” A regime with this description honors the Creator who is Himself “very good.” We must conclude that theistic evolution and progressive creation are in fact idolatrous offences to the character of the God who is. Could they be equal to or worse than the idolatry of atheism?

Satan is a puller and a pusher—doing everything to keep us from central truth. Because evolutionists combine the error of long ages of geology with the truth that the universe and planet earth is old, and because creationists combine the error of a young universe with the truth of Flood geology, these respective errors in either camp persist in a sort of gridlock.

Let creationists be first to acknowledge their error so non-creationists will be induced to reciprocate. As it stands, incomplete factual truth in each arena guarantees intransigence of both. Just as with most doctrines which divide Christians into the smithereens of sectarian views, Satan has pushed theistic evolutionists into long geological ages and pulled creationists into a universe of recent origin so that neither can help the other in those areas or even talk to each other very much—a clever Satanic strategy. Progressive creationists are no better off because they have accepted the misinformation of millions of years of geology and semi-evolution, not too distant from theistic evolution. Creation science would enjoy a quantum advance—a quantum advance—if we would maintain the balance of biblical literalism including Genesis 7 Flood geology with an

undefined age for the cosmos.

IF SOMETHING IN THE SCRIPTURES SEEMS TO BE ABSURD ... EITHER THE CODEX IS FAULTY OR THE TRANSLATOR ERRED OR YOU HAVE NOT UNDERSTOOD IT.

Augustine (5th century)



*Jack sighs in resignation,
"I am going it alone."*

Jack blows the horns hoping to reach his friends' ears.

CHAPTER 10 =

CLOSING THOUGHTS AND SUMMARY

Where biblical concepts are contested, truth does not fear error, rather error fears truth. Consider how the attacks on Pasteur's germ theory of disease strengthened his hypothesis. Because his theory was true, opposition merely strengthened it. Copernicus' detractors assured the eventual victory of his concept of the solar system. Opposition merely dramatized the explanatory power of heliocentrism although it took quite a while. Jeremiah suffered severe derision, but truth triumphed as it ultimately must.

To anyone who has been long persuaded otherwise, new concepts do not penetrate easily. But new interpretations should be welcomed if they have the ring of truth to them, even if they require revision of cherished traditions. There need be no fear of new interpretations because error eventually strengthens the truth. Let the objections come. Truth can take it—and will be the stronger for it. Those who object to my thesis are invited to attempt to overthrow it, or point out weaknesses. Some questions will not be resolved immediately but we can all remain friends while we search for answers.

To show the interpretation offered here to be in error, simply: 1) Show that Genesis 1:1 is a summary statement involving no actual creation. Show what the light was shining on to give night and day on the first day. How were the evenings and mornings of days one and two different from those of days three to six? If a summary, what business does the writer have in verse 2 to launch directly into the description of an earth which has not yet been cre-

ated? 2) Determine that “*asah*” in Genesis 1:14-16 and Exodus 20:11 means “to create” and that Jonah’s reference to God’s “making” of the dry land cannot color the interpretation of day four. 3) Demonstrate that in Exodus 20:11, “heavens” cannot be limited to the work of six days, but applies also to the creation of the galaxies. 4) Show the “subtraction method” for understanding “*tohu wabohu*” to be fallacious. 5) Find a better explanation for “brooding over the waters.” 6) Explain light from distant galaxies in a 10,000 year time frame understandable to ordinary Bible readers as well as astrophysicists. Provide empirical evidence for that explanation. 7) Describe the annoyance God would feel if He decided to wait 12 billion years before completing the biosphere. 8) Show that verse 1 necessarily makes up part of the first day. 9) Prove that the entire universe was permeated by darkness until day one rather than merely the ocean surface. 10) Discount the significance that bodies in the solar system are heavily clouded even to the present hour and foreseeably never will experience a properly defined first day. 11) Discount the glory ascribable to God, the awesome Lord over the vast eons of time, versus a universe limited to 10,000 years.

A sound interpretation 1) must be understandable to ordinary people, 2) must not force the original language, 3) must answer problems experienced by other ideas, 4) must maintain a coherent whole where everything fits with perfect harmony between demonstrable science and the Bible, and 5) must interpret each relevant Scripture without *depending* on collateral scriptures for its interpretation.

A real, personal devil stalks our world—a liar whose first words to the human race were, “Indeed, has God said...?” He even succeeded in provoking David; so all of us must beware. Surely, the central Bible truths are the main object of his relentless attacks.

Paul writes, “I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus” (II Corinthians 11:3). The same principle applies to the simplicity of Genesis 1:1.

The study of this question has renewed my conviction of the supernatural nature of the origins passages. But this study also shows that Satanic forces, which veil men’s minds to the truth, abound in our world. Our Bible stands firmly as the word of God. Certainly, it is assailed by a ruthless devil, but not even one syllable of the Bible needs an apology before established science or any other test when the Hebrew text has been interpreted in simplicity.

The chief objective of this work is to clarify the interpretation of the Bible’s first sentence: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” meaning the universe of galaxies, the planet earth and the other planets as a functioning system. This sublime

first verse must be accepted unembellished and unobscured.

All the concepts proposed here for the interpretation of Genesis are plain, common interpretations, nothing esoteric or complex. Although the common translations may mislead on two critical verses, the original Hebrew is plain enough and passes the test of simplicity. The biosphere interpretation of Genesis is explainable to a small child with simple clarity by direct reading of the Hebrew text, as an orthodox Jew would, or from a good translation.

God's inspired record must nourish the widest possible spectrum of intellect as well as education. An unprejudiced, Hebrew-speaking, 16 year old would understand the text as simply presented here. Complex interpretations are not convincing, especially those which depend on 20th century knowledge. Involved explanations, that do not fit well, arouse suspicions of misfitting puzzle pieces which frustrate the completion of the finished picture. The fact that the interpretation promoted in this book so easily makes an understandable story for kindergarten children as well as educated adults using direct, word-for-word language from Genesis gives an exalted credibility to the message of this book. (Please see appendix "F"—Creation Story for Kindergarten Children).

To define "heavens" as the space-time continuum and "earth" as the basic constituents of matter is to generate confusing and unbiblical definitions that are far from the mind of a simple reader who understands simple language. The use of "evening and morning" is simple language like God saying "Look, you guys, I'm talking about a literal solar day. Have I made myself clear? What else do you need to make it plainer? Think up words for me that would clarify it."

An unprejudiced, Hebrew-speaking, 16 year old would also understand *asah* as a general word without the concretion of a word like "made." This is the "ratchet hazard" of the translation process—the error in word meaning moves easily in the translated direction and then becomes difficult to reverse to the original intent in the minds of the reader. We have taken a soft Hebrew word "to do" and made it hard "to create." We have taken a broad word and made it narrow, which has become a semantic ratchet—a concreted word as translated, far from the soft mix of its original meaning. Once poured it hardens to an irreversible concretion in the mind.

In this book, every word of the original text has been fully received and explained—straightforwardly, plainly and completely. Our thesis resolves all the major problems of biblical creationism. Indeed, all major problems simply vanish with the correct understanding. Nothing has to be explained away from the Hebrew text, not one letter. Apologies for galactic light and much of the isotope data flee the scene. This simple interpretation should impress a skep-

tical and needy world but if we read the text in a skewed manner, there will be no resolution of difficulties.

Whenever our minds become fettered to any less-than-perfect translation, whenever we are unwilling to examine the clear latitude and force of the Hebrew text, we become like beached whales whom no amount of reason can dislodge. We simply continue muttering whatever our preconception taught us. We can go no further. This is a hazard for any of us, and I include myself. Mistaken interpretations can become like Israel's covenant with the Gibeonites. Having made the covenant, they are then obligated with a mutual defense treaty. So they defend a city which will later threaten their existence (Joshua 9 and Judges 19-21). Having made a commitment to a doctrinal error, we then proceed to shore it up with argument even though eventually that error will threaten a good ministry.

The commonly published statement, "God created and made everything in the cosmos in six literal days," illustrates the point. Such an assertion has no biblical basis, but some who hold this view do not budge from this erroneous position which already burdens creation science and threatens worse. When faced with the verbal coercion as strong as that emanating from the fortified bunker of young-universe, young earth dogmatism, intimidation reigns over rational thought. The beached-whale syndrome prevails when a great weight of evidence is ignored in favor of a cherished, established error. "Paradigm fixation" provides a tenacity far beyond reason. Because the teaching structure has been established, the books published, the populace educated, the department chairs appointed, all contingent on the party line, to modify the paradigm almost necessarily falls to a new generation. The united consensus of friends, colleagues and political forces is not easy to relinquish.

Obviously, not everyone will agree with this book. I make no claim to infallibility. All of us together must heed the ten warnings regarding Bible interpretation noted in chapter two. We must review these one by one, slowly, allowing the full force of each warning to reach our hearts. We must cry after knowledge, lift up our voices for understanding to a God who certainly knows every answer (Proverbs 2:1ff). We cannot merely trust our own intellectual powers with only a superficial call upon God for illumination. The humble, praying person is eminently qualified for Bible interpretation. Literacy helps, but is not absolutely essential. One who cannot read can listen, but without humility and prayer, the greatest intellect on planet earth is vulnerable to error and can be imprisoned by error (Matthew 11:25). Some of us would rather walk through fire than to swallow our pride and admit a weakness. Some of us would rather walk through fire than to humble ourselves as a child.

As creationists we enjoy finding amazing agreement between science and Scripture, but caution is needed. An intellectual persuasion, induced by our apologetic certainties, can be mistaken for that childlike faith which regenerates the spirit. A Person-to-person, living, loving encounter with the Son of God Himself is absolutely imperative. One glimpse of His glory dispels doubts like sunrise dispels the darkness. One taste of that honey exposes counterfeits as though one were tasting stone. Without that reality, we are only brass and cymbals, even though we may be intellectually convinced.

A faith that rests on apologetic evidences by itself does not save any man's soul. Our study of origins includes many academic arguments. It may be time to stop and recall that our subject, although important, is not essential, cardinal doctrine. It serves only to answer intellectual questions—to remove obstacles. The enlightenment that brings salvation comes from God, never from mere intellectual persuasion. Flesh and blood does not reveal it but the Father in heaven. Jesus pledged to build His church on this principle.

May God help us to humble ourselves under His mighty hand, that he may exalt us in due time. May all the glory redound to His name.

SUMMARY

God created the universe and planet earth in the undefined past, probably long before the six-day work of Genesis. To view Genesis 1:1 as a topical summary is erroneous and destructive to the true testimony of the creation account. The planet was ocean-covered, but kept in total blackness by a blanket of thick darkness somehow made of "waters that were above" and wrapped around the planet, like a swaddling band and blanket are wrapped around a newborn babe. The planet Venus, with a clouded atmosphere, has never experienced a true "first day" on its surface, and, therefore, has no terrestrial reference to season, years or celestial orientation. Although its atmosphere differs completely in composition (and there may be considerable translucence) it illustrates earth's condition of "darkness on the surface of the ocean" before day one which had a totally opaque cloud cover. Omission of this primary creation passage in Job 38 *cannot fail* to leave a flawed interpretive legacy.

After that basic celestial creation, God hovered like a patient, brooding bird at night for an undefined time until the first day of light over the ocean which took place less than 8,000 years ago.

We conclude that planet earth existed as a coherent body after the verse one creation, rather than an "unformed" fluidic mass, by use of the "subtraction method" (starting at the "very good" com-

pleted sixth day and carefully subtracting each days specified work until the command, “Let there be light.”) Then we look at the remaining scene to determine inescapably that planet earth was complete, ocean covered, although sterile, at verse one and if earth was complete, then the “heavens were complete, being part of the same expression. If earth was made before the heavens then a logical Holy Spirit would say, “In the beginning God created the earth and the heavens,” not the “heavens and the earth.”

The expression “evening and morning” is meaningless except on a rotating sphere with a single source of light. God began clearing the dense blanket on day one and completed it on day four. The light from the created sun and stars was only diffusely visible on day one. On day two, God made the atmosphere (the expanse where birds fly.)

Jonah, the prophet, informs, “Yahweh *made* (asah) the sea and the dry land.” That being the case, then just *how* did God “make” the dry land on day three? “Let the waters be gathered into a sea, and let the dry land appear.” God *made* the dry land, not by creating the dry material, but by uncovering, exposing, and manifesting the submerged continent. God *made* the great lights and stars the very next day, not by creating them, but by uncovering, exposing, and manifesting the obscured lights. They “appeared,” just as the dry land “appeared.” thus completing the “separation of day and night.” The immediate context, of “making” the dry land, clearly justifies a similar picture for the “making” of the great lights and stars on the next day. The stars were able to penetrate the clearing atmosphere like land emerged from water the day before.

However, ordinary readers might not make that connection and might conclude that the text plainly reads that God “made” the stars on day four by which he thinks “created.” Readers should not be burdened with indirect reasoning about how God made the dry land with its logical application to the stars, however compelling it may be. Hence a better translation, which does not mislead casual readers is enjoined for day four. “God brought forth, or prepared, or established, or did, or put into execution, or produced, or performed, or brought about, or put, or arranged, or provided, or set in order two great lights and the stars” on day four—take your pick.** “Made” is okay if accompanied and understood with the Jonah caveat. The verb is commonly translated over six dozen ways including those cited above. “Do” or “Did” is, by far, the most common translation.

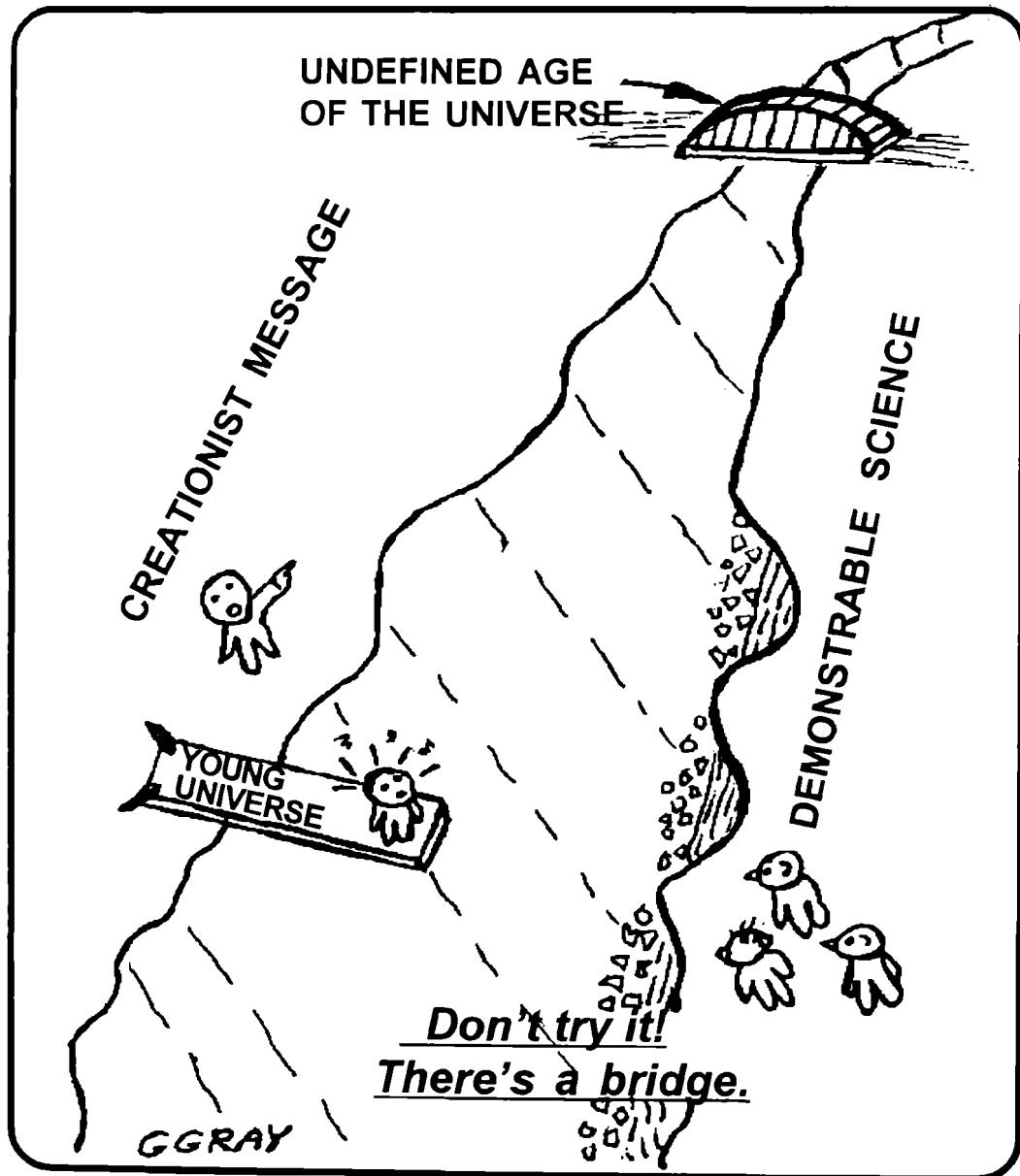
In English we “do” our dishes (transitive verb). The dishes are not *created* by “doing” them and neither were the stars created when God “did” them. *Asah* is transitive in Genesis 1:16.

The luminaries (lamps or lights) were “set” or “given forth” in the atmospheric expanse in the same way that rainbows are “set”

** Actually, blend several translations to find a meaning suitable to the context of a completed heavens and the completion of the separation of day and night.

in the cloud (same word, *nathan*). Their function described on day four was for seasonal markers. The Bible was written for men, so the viewing platform is the surface of the earth, where man was to dwell. God Himself talks to Job about the constellations, obviously viewed from Job's perspective (Job 38:31-33). To suggest an isolated planet earth created first, followed by celestial bodies and then earth itself accelerated into orbits later, from its patent absurdity, justifies incredulity from the scientific community.

No suggestion is indicated in the record of a temporary illumination for days one to three. That is a forced construct imposed on the text to rescue a mistaken concept. Accept the obscuring cloud of Job 38 made translucent for day one and then transparent for day



four and all major problems are solved.

The sun “stopped shining,” its “light failed” at the crucifixion. All agree it was hidden from visibility, not extinguished. Like the three day darkness in Egypt, and the darkness predicted at the second coming, these illustrate the darkness before day one.**

Whether celestial bodies were created on day four or simply unveiled then, an observer on earth would experience no difference at all, hence, God’s *description* could be identical either way. Therefore, the record of day four provides no compulsion to think “created” or “made” when the verb is allowed its contextual force.

The Hebrew *asah* when translated, “worked on” or “brought forth” or “did” in the origins passages, better reflects the meaning of the Hebrew word in such a context. All the “days” of Genesis were literal, consecutive, solar time periods. God cited the six days, followed by a Sabbath, as an example for man to work and rest.

The words “heaven” and “earth” are each defined in two ways in Genesis, one of which is specified by God Himself *during the six-day activity* as atmosphere and continental land. Therefore, the definitions assigned during those six days *must* modify the passage in Exodus when referencing the very same six days. Exodus 20:11 refers only to the *work* of the six-day period which pertained to earth’s air, land and sea for “work” is the setting of the fourth commandment. To apply it to the stellar heavens violates the context, for it has nothing to do with the original creation of sun, moon and stars, completed in verse one but only the “work” of the following six days. Air and land, having been defined by God Himself during those referenced six days, simply leaves us with no other option.

The *ex nihilo* creation of the universe is not a suitable example for men to imitate in their weekly work pattern, because men cannot create anything *ex nihilo*. Therefore, it is reasonable that God’s six day example was limited to “making” or working on pre-existing materials—like man does in his daily labor. This work, on the already existing planet, is recorded for us beginning with the first earth day. Exodus 20:11 does *not* refer to anything that God created *ex nihilo* before there were any earth days, namely the universe of stars, planets, and angels. The fourth commandment is not even primarily a passage on origins. It is much wiser to build a cosmogony from passages specifically centering on that subject.

This view of Genesis can accommodate a short or long period of time before the first day. Where the Bible remains silent, we may cautiously look to science and make our guesses. In any case, we must glorify God as Lord of the vastness of time as well as the vastness of space. But no room can be allowed for biological devel-

** Had the sun been extinguished, the entire world would have witnessed it from India to Spain at all latitudes and it could not have escaped ubiquitous historical notice. Historical record does exist for a local darkness in the land of promise.

opment during the vast time period. The biology and dry land geology of our earth is recent—less than 8,000 years old.

QUESTIONS FOR INVESTIGATION

The various Bible-based proposals about origins invite scientific examination. For example, if the earth remained dark and without oxygen for long ages, would it not leave a characteristic historical print somewhere? Would Precambrian formations that have escaped metamorphism possibly reflect those conditions? What do isotope ratios tell us about age before day one? Can we find corroboration that the land was under water and in darkness for megayears before elevation? Can the water cloud of thick darkness be simulated in laboratory cloud chamber experiments? The Scriptures give us the only reliable direction, but the correct interpretation has nothing to fear from any valid scientific scrutiny. Age determination, being undefined in the Bible, must, cautiously, depend on science. That leaves us comfortable with any conclusion, young or old. The opinion expressed here is that it is better assumed to be old. Until the facts are explained, notably of light from distant galaxies and isotope ratios in the earth's crust, that opinion need not change.

THE TEST

Evolutionists are deceived. With the deception often comes an arrogant confidence and disdain for dialogue with non-evolutionists. A pseudo-scientific basis brings assured certainty to them while plunging headlong into disastrous error—making mistakes with confidence. The press is managed, the party line is inviolate. Change will not occur without a cataclysmic wrenching.

Are we better than they? We creationists constitute a subculture today, but we have our own establishment, publications, assumptions, appointed teachers, party line, and, do we dare say, *confident deceptions*? If the mandatory young universe is questioned, some creationists ridicule, refuse to examine alternatives, and, in a small way, ostracize. The deceptions of creationists are small in comparison to evolution but real nevertheless. Willingness to discuss legitimate issues openly is the test of our intellectual honesty and moral strength. Let this book provide a friendly invitation to such a debate lest we also “make mistakes with confidence.”

Because the concepts in this book are somewhat novel, it may, for some people, require some “soaking time” before firm conclusions can be drawn. That is quite okay—let it soak for a while. But a rational conclusion must be drawn and the sooner the better.

Men and women can be persuaded to a point intellectually, but the sheer weight and volume of voices supporting the traditional

view, including the added force of warm and treasured social friendships, seems to give reasons to retain that traditional position in spite of valid persuasion otherwise. The reflection, "It just *must* be right," brings a false reassurance. How could all those godly friends or those great intellects be mistaken? The "tyranny of the incumbent view" persuades more than reason. Just ask Peter and the disciples. Ask Copernicus, Jenner, Pasteur, Bretz or the other pioneers. "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe" (Proverbs 29:25).

PREDICTION (Not a prophecy)

Unless creationists recant their dogma about the young age of the universe, evolutionists will launch an all-out intellectual attack on creationism within twenty or thirty years. Their goal will be extermination. They will focus on the age issue which is our Achilles heel. Small wonder, for they happen to be right on stellar and mineral ages and the school trials in Louisiana and Arkansas were essentially won on those points because of the young-universe assumption. They will, of course, combine all sorts of ostensible arguments with the age argument. The creationist error on star and isotope dates will give a false credibility to their erroneous fossil ages.

This will be followed by severe legislation in various countries, partly because of a globalization of political and economic forces.

Whether this prediction eventuates or not, creationists are under an enormous moral responsibility to "get it right" on the age issue. As it stands now, to divert creationists from a young-age pre-conception is like trying to stop a train or might even require Armageddon. Preliminary versions of this book have been in the hands of numerous well known creationists with almost no response, in fact a troubling silence. I have met every objection within the boundary of faithful hermeneutics and straightforward biblical literalism. Creationists owe the world viable responses to the many arguments in this book which, so far, have proven unanswerable. Can we continue presuming on the certainty of a young universe and planet earth mineral base in spite of the Scripture exposed here? Because no viable rebuttal has surfaced yet, the answer is, "No."

Since the above was written, several attempts have surfaced, notably an exchange between me and Dr. Russell Humphreys in the Creation Research Society Quarterly. (See December 2002 issue p199 with references to previous letters) After carefully reading this book, please compare these reviews and arguments to your own objective appraisal. It is reassuring to me that no significant refutations have been forthcoming.

Some of the appendices are essential for confirmation of the themes in this book depending partly on the background knowledge of each reader. Every reader should read "Language Challenge for Hebrew Students," and "Creation Story for Kindergarten," appendices "E" and "F." Please consider perusal of these and other addenda.

LAST WORD

Evolutionists appear deathly afraid of the global Flood concept and young-universe creationists seem to be deathly afraid of an old universe. There is a perfect parallel—both are mistaken. There exists today a growing edifice called creationism. It performs a priceless work, worthy of our blessing, but its insistence on a young universe is without foundation. That idea is chiefly founded on two misinterpreted scriptures.

Until creationists can *prove* in the face of compelling biblical evidence to the contrary, that Exodus 20:11 refers to the entire cosmos and Genesis 1:16 refers to the creation or assembly of sun, moon and stars, all activity promoting a mandatory young universe should be suspended. As we would ground a 767 airliner until a potentially catastrophic defect is corrected, so we must withhold dogmatic assertions demanding a young universe. Instead of proving a young universe, those two scriptures provide evidence supporting the exclusive biosphere interpretation of creation week allowing a much earlier creation of the stellar heavens and basic planet earth.

Accept this straightforward and firm interpretation and every serious difficulty conflicting science and the Bible disappears. Hold to the 8000 year universe and harmony is impossible. Hold to theistic evolution or progressive creation and harmony is equally impossible.

No significant arguments refuting this far-from-perfect book have been offered from theistic evolutionists, progressive creationists or young-universe creationists. I invite anyone to try as long as we can remain friends in the process. When feasible, I would be willing to consider lectures or debates.

**TRUTH HAS NOTHING TO FEAR
UNDER INVESTIGATION.**

Aldon Thompson

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www.illustramedia.com



**TRUTH IS NOT DETERMINED
BY A SHOW OF HANDS**

APPENDIX A

A brief history of the “origins” controversy

Major changes in geologic thinking occurred in the late 18th and early 19th century—chiefly with the geological publications of James Hutton and Charles Lyell. Hutton and Lyell promoted the principle of uniformitarianism, which states that natural agents now at work on and within the earth have operated with general uniformity through immensely long periods of time.

This idea of gradualism has essentially been overthrown in geological circles today, but for 150 years it reigned with little opposition. It laid the foundation for Darwin’s theory and publication in 1859. Mistaken geological assumptions established and then perpetuated evolution’s firm control on academic, political, philosophical, and popular publications. This grip continues to this day, even after the overthrow of the foundational assumptions.

It is a curious phenomenon that even though the founding assumptions have been abandoned, still no adjustment in the ages assigned to the geologic column has occurred. It would be most gratifying if, after exhaustive research, some reader of this book would accept the challenge to make this issue the thesis for a doctoral dissertation or a book—*The assignment of dates to the geologic column has not fulfilled the standards of scientific objectivity.*

After Darwin published On the Origin of the Species by Means of Natural Selection, some intellectual circles seized upon his theory. Soon the consensus became so overwhelming that it proved unpopular to question Darwinism, although several prominent individuals did so. Many Christian apologists quickly succumbed to the onslaught of evolution.

The latter part of the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries were characterized in many Christian circles by attempts to compromise. This gave rise to a theistic type of evolution. Many of those who followed this view and still believed the biblical record (at least partly), postulated a long period of time between Genesis 1:1 and 1:2. During that time, they supposed that an entire creation (over millions of years) and an eventual destruction took place which accounted for the great geological layers with their fossil deposits. This became known as the “gap theory,” and a few modern devotees remain.

Gap theory has been largely abandoned but theistic evolution has not and there are almost as many versions of it as there are heads thinking about it.

In 1961, Henry Morris and John Whitcomb published a watershed book entitled The Genesis Flood which masterfully explained the fossil record and all geological formations as a consequence of the biblical Flood described in Genesis 7. This book, more than any other, restored confidence in the biblical account and delivered a direct blow to evolution theory. Morris and Whitcomb showed that a recent flood offered a much better explanation of the geological strata. Thus the modern creation science movement was born.

Whitcomb and Morris not only believed in a recent flood, but also interpreted Genesis 1 to teach a recent creation of the celestial heavens—a young universe of not more than 10,000 years' duration. Perhaps these men were so reactive against the long ages postulated by uniformitarianism, so repelled by atheistic evolution, that they jettisoned anything that might support a long history for the universe. The old “gap theory” with the ruin/reconstruction concept of theistic evolution deserves repugnance but it is a mistake to identify biblical creation with a mandatory young universe.

In any case, young-universe doctrine has become primal dogma with the most aggressive modern creationists. This brief history brings us, in a nutshell, to the thesis of this book—a major objection to the concept of a mandatory young universe. At the same time this treatise makes no allowance whatsoever for evolution and long, geologic ages. The question is, “What are the biblical limits to the age of the universe?”

The assignment of dates to the geologic column has not fulfilled the standards of scientific objectivity.

A BRIEF REFLECTION—AID TO APPENDIX “B” Why God is silent.

God does not ordinarily violate the laws of nature in a way obviously visible to us humans. Often He masks His works (Isaiah 45:15). After giving a more-than-adequate general revelation in the creation, He normally keeps a *deliberate* silence and *apparent* absence so that we may seek Him without intellectual coercion. Therefore the search by an intellectually challenged person with spiritual illumination, is just as valuable and authentic (and equally as certain of success) as the search from a genius. It is “hid from the wise and prudent but revealed to babes.” The “wise and prudent,” with high IQ’s and impressive letters sometimes have a hard time to understand this but I believe it is a working principle which God most of the time employs for an ultimately good purpose. He could write daily instructions in the sky but He does not normally do that. He wants our search for Him to be free from intellectual coercion, from the heart, derived from His trustworthy character, against and in spite of prevailing evil spiritual forces.

The reality of evil—war, injustice, greed, immorality, genocide, human miseries of all kinds (all caused by our rebellion in the garden of Eden) makes us wonder why God does not show Himself and stop these atrocities. But for the Bible believer there is the great equalizer—the great and dreadful Day of Judgment when every wrong on earth will be made right and the entire universe will be upheld in absolute justice. Even the hairs of one’s head are numbered and, if uprooted in malice, each hair will be restored with reward to the innocent and retribution to the guilty. In that day we will easily understand good reasons for God’s silence and man’s journey through evil and injustice. Then “THE LORD ALONE” will be exalted in that day. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

This should strengthen our appeal on the following pages.

APPENDIX B

Absolute Biblical Truth—On what Basis?

The best route to confirm the truth of Scripture is not pursued in the field of apologetics but rather in seeking a personal friendship with God Himself. This may seem surprising but the danger lies in being intellectually convinced by evidence while remaining spiritually barren. A glimpse of the heart of a good and gracious God will do more in one minute than a library full of “Christian evidence.”

Hear the words of Solomon:

“My son, if you will *receive* my words, and *hide* my commandments with you; so that you *incline* your ear unto wisdom and *apply* your heart to understanding: yes, if you *cry* after knowledge and *lift up your voice* for understanding: if you *seek her as silver* and *search for her as for hid treasures*; then you shall understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom. Out of His mouth comes knowledge...” (Proverbs 2:1 ff).

This is strong, emotional language. Yes, the Lord gives knowledge but it comes in the context of a diligently searching heart.

The reason so few people are given a close relationship with God is simple. Most men do not want it enough to fervently seek Him as pictured here. It is astounding that men are so unwilling to search for their Creator. Ask yourself, “Do I cry, *cry, cry* after the Lord Himself?” God will not disappoint anyone with a seeking heart—seeking the knowledge of God as one would search for a hidden treasure. It is infallibly certain that you will find God, the most priceless knowledge conceivable, if you implement this simple set of instructions.

But consider this. God has deliberately allowed forces in this world which militate *against* seeking Him—peer pressures, time constraints, evil philosophies, evil religions, a fallen devil and God’s own deliberate silence and *apparent* absence, so that those who truly seek and truly find God are a much greater prize to Him (please see facing page). Against the tide, upstream, uphill, against the winds of opposition, we find God; not in an organization, not in a religion, but in a personal contact with a personal God.

It is hard to find any good reason to argue with this exhortation from Proverbs. It simply will work as surely as God exists, and it is only difficult because we really don’t want it that much. Some of us want to hang on to our sins, so seeking Him is inconvenient for us.

If sports, visiting with friends, television, your job, or read-

ing less important things prevent you from earnest prayer, then you are not searching for God as for a hidden treasure.

Perhaps our first prayer should be, "Give me a hunger for You, God." What could be wrong with that simple prayer for starters? Someone has suggested a prayer which might be appropriate for most of us, "Lord, I admit that I am not eager to seek You, but I am willing to be made willing." Just add sincerity and even that one will work.

If you doubt God's existence, here is a simple prayer suggestion, "God, if you are real, please show me the truth." If sought in the spirit of Proverbs 2, and *over a long period of time if necessary*, you cannot fail. Big "if?" Yes, but available to any child. Too many of us open the Bible casually, become discouraged and bored when there is honey in the rock just steps away for those who persist in search. God is glorified if we search against resistance and those who do so are a priceless gem to Him. The alternative to a fervent search is dangerous guessing (and certain disaster).

Thus far I have made no reference to any special religion but only a search for God who has made His existence clear enough and who expects response from every man. That is where any person can begin. However, I am a Christian who believes that Jesus is the *way*, the *truth* and the *life*. No man comes to the Father *except through Him* (John 14:6). The assumption is that any true search for God will end finding Jesus—God in the flesh and man's *only* hope. Faith in Jesus turns God's well deserved wrath into God's blessing—enemies can be reconciled to God. But if you are not that far yet, begin as instructed in Proverbs chapter two. You will be eternally and profoundly grateful for beginning that search.

Besides priceless eternal life, the forgiveness of sins and an assured destiny of bliss, your reward will also be a coherent understanding of everything that really matters. The facts of science begin to harmonize with the testimony of literal Scripture and you begin to think, "Everything is making sense in this world of chaos." Even sin, death, famine and war, become explainable and within God's ultimate control. One is assured that the entire universe will be upheld in perfect justice—every wrong endured in this world of injustice will be made right in a great day of judgment to the precision of a counted hair. If any person has lost even one hair to malice, that hair has been counted and will be returned. No one will have a just complaint.

Should I seek help from other Christians? Yes, if you can find sincere believers who promote Jesus, the Christ ahead of their organization, and whom you know to be without hypocrisy. In that case they can help you in finding the truth. In that case they can

provide you with warmth, love and good understanding. Just be careful that they exalt the word of God and the person of God with no desire to draw you away as a disciple of an organization in place of a person-to-person friendship with Jesus Himself.

Genuine faith in Jesus organically connects each believer to Him, just as we, by birth, were formerly organically connected with our father Adam. So now by a “new birth” we are organically and spiritually connected to Christ so that He is able to contract all the guilt we have accumulated or will accumulate and we are actually credited with all of His righteousness. The Christian, even though a former criminal, now stands “whiter than snow” before the bar of divine justice and uncondemned, while at the same time Jesus stood condemned with all of our sins. His resurrection from the dead to die nevermore is proof that the believers sins are gone forever. The believer is “*in Christ*,” and therefore “faultless before the throne of His glory.” With this “no condemnation” standing, the Holy Spirit enters the heart and with the Holy Spirit comes love, joy, peace, and all the wonderful fruit (Galatians 5:22). Love for Jesus and the people of God, love for righteousness and hatred of evil replace selfishness and pride. When the Christian sins, his standing “*in Christ*” is not lost but the Holy Spirit convicts and the believer is stricken with grief and repentance. Thus the believer’s sky is all filled with rays of confidence, love and white-as-snow righteousness because he is “*in Christ*.”

By total contrast, anyone outside of Christ is under God’s wrath and will be consigned to an eternity of selfishness (which was his choice on earth). All restraints of police or social structure will be removed and that person will be free to lust and war in frustration ***FOREVER***. “Let him that is filthy, be filthy yet more.” (Revelation 22:11). If you have ever contemplated horror, this is the horror of all horrors, to be selfish forever. “See that you refuse not Him who speaks. For if they did not escape Him who spoke on earth, (at the giving of the ten commandments) much more shall we not escape if we turn away from him who speaks from heaven. Whose voice then shook the earth but ... then He will shake both heaven and earth... For our God is a consuming fire.” (Hebrews 12:25ff) The choice is ‘white-as-snow’ forgiveness or eternal selfishness with its consequent “tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath.” (Romans 2:8ff) Not a pretty picture—this is the spiritual part of hell and it may be literal fire as well—I do not know.

Jesus said many go the broad road to destruction and few there be who find the narrow road to life. (Matthew 7:13ff) Hear it from Jesus lips, “Few find life.” This should strike fear in the heart of any complacent person.

Since apologetics can be valuable to eliminate unnecessary intellectual questions, the following bibliography is appended for that purpose. One would think that abundantly fulfilled prophecy, unique to the Bible alone, would be sufficient to silence any detractor who questions biblical infallibility. Over 200 Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled during the crucifixion week of Jesus alone (41,pp649-668). Most were accomplished by His enemies. Read Isaiah 53 carefully (712 B.C.) in one hand with Matthew or Luke in the other hand. Astounding! The Bible is clearly supernatural. Take all the religions of the world together—not one of them can claim the fulfillment of clear, prophetic utterances. Only the Bible triumphs, using audacious rhetoric which permeates both Testaments.

Another evidence of Scripture truth arises from the “Prophetic Enactments.” These astounding records are genuine historical situations where people, freely living their own lives and without themselves even knowing it, act out a representation or shadow of larger or more significant future events or characters. Such “enactments” are far more than a mere illustration or allegory and by their nature are limited to divine authorship.

Human authors *always* resort to a fiction story if they want to allegorize, because no human author can direct the lives of other men and situations to provide a perfect setting for his thesis. So they have to fabricate suitable stories.

In the Bible, by striking contrast, God has set forth some of His truth in a way which relies on His ability to run the world in spite of devils or Hitlers while He provides a perfect setting for His appeal, allegorically and prophetically. Notable examples are Cain and Abel, a prophetic enactment of the conflict of the redeemed and the unredeemed; Abraham and Isaac, a prophetic picture of the death and resurrection of Christ; Jacob and Esau, Jacob and Benjamin, Judah and Joseph, all shadows of momentous future events. A grasp of this concept will forever erase doubts about the veracity of Holy Scripture and it will personalize the God of Scripture.

The last four characters mentioned above are the subject of a devotional book which exposes some of these “prophetic enactments” with a magnificent view of the heart of God. This person-to-person fellowship with God dissolves every doubt and makes the believer into a “new creation.” **

See page 146 for Apologetics Bibliography.

** Obtain “**Benjamin and Judah, Shadows That Shout From the Book of Genesis**” from Morningstar Publications, 931 15th St., Washougal, WA 98671

APPENDIX "C"

THE GENESIS FLOOD SEEN IN THE GRAND CANYON A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL GEOLOGY by Gorman Gray Revision March 2002

The Grand Canyon and its strata are undisputed facts, but how it came to be is anything but undisputed along with all of our world's geological features. Evolutionists announce with confidence that the Cambrian deposits occurred 550 million years ago while creationists believe almost all of earth's major sediments were laid down by a recent worldwide flood as described in Genesis 7. The academic, political, and intellectual worlds are dominated by the evolutionary view but within the last 50 years there has been a modest but persistent and growing renaissance of "Flood geology." The cross section map in conjunction with this paper will support the creationist view. **

This work is an attempt to conceptualize biblically based geology and no effort is given to documentation which I leave for more authoritative works. It is intended as an overview for neophytes (which is most of us) and is not promoted as a research paper but rather as a plausible *model* to help understand the most prominent facts of geology within a Bible framework. Because an overview attempts to cover so much ground, many important concepts or facts may be no more than cursorily mentioned, certainly not exhausted.

The creationist interpretation will appear incredible (or worse) to those schooled in mainstream evolutionary assumptions but please hold those opinions in abeyance until a fair and open-minded look has been weighed from the following explanation and referenced resources. We contend that the global Flood makes far more sense (from a strictly scientific view) than does the uniformitarian or evolutionary view even without the biblical considerations. But that said, I do not imagine that the hypotheses listed below are in every way correct. It represents an accretion from mostly creationist writers with a few of my own nonprofessional ideas sprinkled throughout. There is much speculation acknowledged in the following proposed model with words like "probably" and "possibly" freely used.

The cross section map (with its dates and notes excised and replaced with these below) will provide a fascinating and eye-opening course in biblical geology, which explains the source of fossils, dinosaurs, the "Cambrian explosion" of life forms, coal, oil and a brief outline of geological phenomena derived from the Bible and factual data. On the map, Cambrian refers to the Tapeats sandstone, the Bright Angel shale, and the Muav limestone. Precambrian is anything below the Tapeats sandstone.

An old universe and an old planet earth (mineral base only) is allowed from a literal interpretation of Genesis, but the *biosphere* is uncompromisingly recent as determined from the genealogies and supported by the following discussion. Many creationists insist on a young planet earth and a young universe from their interpretation of two Bible verses, but this paper will assume an *undefined* biblical age for the planet earth and the stars. (See *The Age of the Universe: What Are the Biblical Limits?* following this paper.) These creationists are right about the age of organic life and most surficial geology. We owe a great debt of gratitude to the pioneers who gave us a clear picture of biblical geology. But most of them are mistaken about the age of planet earth itself and the universe. Those may, indeed, be billions of years old, if required by measurable data.

This brief introduction will necessarily be oversimplified. My purpose is to help us understand an admissably complex subject at least roughly. For a more technical and fully documented discussion, highly recommended books are referenced below.

There is in our world a living, personal devil of fantastic power and intelligence. Since our race fell in the garden, he has continued to be a liar and murderer "who deceives the whole world." (Revelation 12:9). Remember Jesus' breathtaking words, "I thank you Father that you have hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them to babes." If God hides something, you may be sure that it is successfully hidden, and will not be found out no matter how wise and prudent any researcher may be. God deliberately allowed a murderous devil in our world (for ultimately good purposes) just as he allowed a "lying spirit in the mouth of all (Ahab's) prophets" in the days of Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 22:22). However, that devil carefully chooses his deceits. Anything that impinges on his relentless war against Christ will certainly be an object of perversion, obfuscation or outright lies. The hard sciences will not be attacked because he wants to splice his lies in with that mathematically assured science to give a false credibility to his deceptions and also because they have no direct bearing on the credibility of Scripture. But the soft sciences like geology, psychology, archaeology and history are a fertile ground for promotion of his kingdom of darkness. Researchers in these fields are not necessarily themselves deliberate liars because they sincerely believe and sincerely teach what the establishment has taught them. The deliberate lies come from the father of lies "who deceives the whole world" and his "lying spirits" who coach the researchers. Of course, some of the researchers themselves may promote known falsehoods as proven historically but the main source is Satan himself. Accordingly, among "Ahab's prophets" today (with many happy exceptions) are geologists, psychologists, historians and experts in the related "sciences." It behooves each of us to give sober consideration to the possibility of self deception and earnestly petition the God of truth daily for preservation from error. Without help from God on any subject

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relating to Bible truth or salvation, deception is not only possible but inevitable.
This map and paper must be carefully *studied*, not merely read.

Something catastrophic has wasted and wrecked our planet on a global scale. Once this is discerned one can see abundant evidence for it everywhere. The Bible identifies this event as a worldwide Flood. "All the fountains of the great deep were broken up and the floodgates of heaven were opened," an event which inflicted universal ruin on our planet. It is possible that the earth was impacted by an asteroid or comet, directed infallibly by the hand of God although the Bible does not tell us this—it is only speculation, although it has good support from the facts of geology both on earth and throughout the solar system. We will pursue our discussion of biblical geology with this thought as one possibility. In any case, Yahweh says, "I, even I, do cause (a worldwide Flood)." The mechanism used is not revealed.

In 1929 an event occurred off the coast of Newfoundland, Southeastern Canada, which was destined to change the concepts of geological depositions and help to revolutionize geology. An earthquake triggered an underwater landslide that year near the continental shelf. This became a turbid slurry of rocks, mud and sediment in the ocean depths.

Before the days of satellite communication many transatlantic cables were carrying telephone messages to Europe. When the slurry of debris off Newfoundland was moving underwater it snapped these cables, one by one. The time of each severance was easily documented and the location of all twelve cables was well known so that simple calculations determined that the underwater turbidity flow traveled, mostly horizontally, at about 60 miles (100 km) per hour.

In the 1960s, this deposition was studied using oceanographic techniques of core drilling, and soil analysis. It was determined that the flow from this landslide traveled underwater for a distance of 430 miles, (700 km) and at an average depth of only two to three feet (less than one meter) and covering over 40,000 square miles (100,000 sq. km.). Similar underwater landslide deposits exist in the Mediterranean, the South Pacific and many places in the world.

This paper and the accompanying map will examine the geology of the Grand Canyon and show that deposits exist on a global scale similar to the Newfoundland deposit described above except that most of them are not turbidites but hyper concentrated flows of enormously more volume and density. Their origin is best explained by the recent global Flood. This represents an interpretation of geology greatly distant from the mainstream evolutionary variety found in most of our universities and educational institutions. We are convinced these institutions are simply wrong—not on the verifiable facts but on the *interpretation* of the facts and particularly the dating of past events. Radioisotope dating is often cited as an absolute dating method, and someday it may become a reliable tool for science, and already is for some applications, but at present its supposed absolute accuracy is betrayed by its multiplied failures and unwarranted assumptions. More on isotope dating later.

Masses of water, of different temperatures and therefore of different densities, do not tend to mix easily as one may discover swimming in a lake. One often encounters zones in the lake where a sudden marked difference in temperature is noticed as though the water masses had a distinct boundary. Oceanic masses with distinct boundaries are easily shown as well. A slurry of sediment maintains its boundaries in a similar way. Under water, the sediments do not weigh heavily and almost slither along the bottom, quickly and for great distances. Also, the nature of each differing roiled water mass, such as redeposited limestone versus a sandstone slurry keeps them separated into fairly distinct units even when suspended in water. Floodwaters are particularly good at sorting suspended materials into strata. But lava flows or floating log mats of the prolific pre-Flood uprooted vegetation and pre-Flood peat also create distinct seams. Vegetable matter which gets buried from an overburden of sandstone (or whatever) with heat and pressure becomes seams of coal. Distinct boundaries for coal seams are never satisfactorily explained apart from flood water deposit.

After the Newfoundland landslide discoveries, geologists began looking at the well known sedimentary formations throughout the world and discovered that most of them showed the characteristics, not of turbidites, but of rapid underwater formation. Over half the sedimentary formations in North America have now been identified as rapid, massive underwater deposits by many geologists and every few years more are found to fall into this category. Thus deposits *above* the "great unconformity" (the boundary between Precambrian and Cambrian—a world wide phenomenon) are now thought by many geologists to have been deposited rapidly and catastrophically. (The great unconformity is shown on the cross section map, item 2—please observe) The Flood/pre-Flood boundary may be at this great unconformity although some creationists include parts of the Archean and some of the Proterozoic strata as Flood derived as well. In any case, the evidence is abundant for catastrophic deposits and the great unconformity *requires* that anything above it represents deposits over a demolished world below.

Repeat that. *The great unconformity requires that anything above it represents deposits over a demolished world below.* Evolutionary geologists now acknowledge numerous local catastrophes to account for many different regions but they do not accept one cataclysm responsible for all of them. Thus, the *facts* of science are not argued, but the *interpretation* of the facts is most certainly controverted.

The massive, rapid deposition concept of concentrated flow is important to our look at the Grand Canyon sediments and is a major corroboration of the Genesis Flood. With some possible exceptions, strata and formations below the great unconformity, appear to be the broken and often twisted, chaotic remnants of the well-ordered, *non-chaotic* original creation before the Flood—those above the great unconformity are Flood deposits. Many of the "Flood" formations cover areas of hundreds of thousands of square miles. Nothing but a worldwide flood sensibly accounts for their deposition, and gradual deposition is precluded in the nature of lava flows, volcanic deposits, massive concentrated flows, coal seams and redeposited limestones.

Although the well-informed leadership in geology long realized that catastrophism is evident everywhere, until recently it has not been so well known at the university level. The same situation prevailed for years with the fossil record. The top paleontologists knew that the fossil record did not show a slow and gradual increase in complexity, Cambrian and above, but many university students were

not aware of this change in thinking. Gould and Eldridge developed a theory of "punctuated equilibrium" in which they specifically admitted that no such progression of transitional forms exists. Their system is an attempt to explain its absence while still retaining the evolutionary hypothesis. This recent idea holds that evolution occurs rapidly in a small local area until a better specimen is achieved which then takes over and obliterates the "inferior" organism. So the leaders in both fields—paleontology as well as geology—were operating for some time with information not commonly shared with students probably because that information was in fact hostile to evolutionary theory.

Even though the basic concept of uniformitarian gradualism for deposited strata has been overthrown (formerly the kingpin assumption indicating old geological ages) curiously, there has been little adjustment in the dates applied to the geologic column. Isotope dating is usually cited as giving "absolute" assurance of the date assignments but while it appears superficially to be a solid dating device, in practice it yields many discordant conclusions. It appears that there are strong forces to hold on to the millions of years concept of geology in order to preserve the supposed time for evolution to occur. This is one of numerous reasons to believe that a conspiracy, outside and above the human realm, has controlled the spin given to the interpretation of geology. It appears that most of our academic, scientific, political and even religious institutions are dominated by evolution without even a single fact of science to support it. This testifies to a gigantic deception ruling over the minds of men, which could hardly prevail so pervasively unless energized by an evil, supernatural force. (See Job 1 and 2; Ephesians 2; Matthew 11; John 8; Revelation 12—all worthwhile scriptures to contemplate.)

Evolutionary geologists now hypothesize *millions of years of non-activity between formations* in order to preserve the evolutionary time schedule. There is no evidence supporting numerous hiatuses. One would think in even a hundred years there would be extensive roots or worm burrows or clam tracks or huge canyons from stream erosion. Instead, most of the interfaces are sharply defined throughout the world's strata as illustrated on the cross section map. For the evolutionary concept this requires a sudden, revolution in ecosystems at each and every transition which is a real stretch to any rational mind. Notice the gashes and hodge podge of extreme erosion on the uppermost topography on the map. If there were millions of years of time between deposits, each and every contact line should be an abundantly apparent and well marked unconformity like the erosion profiles of the topmost strata of today.

A much more satisfying explanation for geology is a worldwide flood, which necessarily created the geologic column and almost all the fossil burials including the dinosaurs. It deposited the entire column quickly, including huge quantities of organic material, much of it within the space of one year—a catastrophe of unimaginable energy. These vast organic burials of the profuse pre-Flood vegetation (an inventory perhaps 50 times worldwide greater than that of today) were then fossilized or reduced to coal or petroleum after the deluge. The Flood was possibly triggered by a cataclysmic physical event such as an asteroidal impact—a very big one which may have split the earth's crust into plates and precipitated the continental separations at that time and/or later. Who could possibly guess the consequences of such a catastrophe? We can only examine the result and conjecture at the mechanisms.

NASA scientists are now postulating an asteroidal impact in Mars' history which precipitated volcanic activity and unleashed the devastating regional flooding abundantly evident on that planet. This was reported in the popular media in October of 1998. These horrendous floods on Mars provide still more credibility to the Genesis record for earth history. The Grand Canyon was probably carved in a matter of weeks as shown by the lack of appreciable downstream residue in Nevada or California. It left the canyon area with such force and volume that most of it has been carried far out to sea on the continental shelf area. Where are all those cubic miles of Grand Canyon materials? Only small amounts are found downstream from that vast empty chasm and there exist many like areas around the world.

Post-Flood activity uplifted the mountain ranges and produced an ice "age" all within a brief time span, perhaps a few hundred years. An ocean, warmed by newly formed mid-ocean ridges and other volcanics from the bleeding, battered planet, made for high evaporation rates and high precipitation. Simultaneously, debris from the surface volcanics blocked sunlight to cool the continents with an ice "age" of a few centuries as a result. A single, biblical cataclysm, which staggers the imagination in its magnitude, sensibly accounts for all the data observable today.

The Greenland ice core ring readings which have been interpreted to represent up to 100,000 years of ice accumulation probably did not allow for a worldwide "lake effect" of cold air passing over warm oceans for a few hundred years after a global Flood. Buffalo, New York, commonly gets huge quantities of snow from cold air passing over warm Lake Erie. Well, just imagine the whole world like that. Everywhere the air is cold due to multiplied volcanic particulates in the continental air and everywhere the oceans are warm due to volcanics underwater. Freezing and melting or even snow and then rain alternating might occur daily creating a distinct freeze/melt ice core ring. The daily snowfall may have produced one ring *per day* or per storm, let alone per year, making the post-Flood accumulations of 5000 years ago similar or much greater than the many hundreds of rings and the 260 feet of ice which covered the World War II lost squadron in southern Greenland in just 50 years.

The ice, if it may have been joined to the continental masses 5000 or so years ago, makes invalid the assumption that drilling on today's continental divide of Greenland would make the ice flow equal in all directions from the core location. Back then it probably was pushing outward from North America in a single massive ice cap united to that of Greenland. Therefore the data may be skewed accordingly. The lower portions of the cores are hard to read with no measureable hydrogen peroxide or distinguishable isotopes of oxygen to distinguish annual from "stormly" rings, although creationists do approve the readings to about 2000 years before present. As one descends the core, the distinction between rings produced by each storm versus annual rings becomes very obscure. Since "lake effect" dominates, everything changes and the lost squadron may be dwarfed in yearly accumulation by that of the immediate post-Flood activity. My non-professional guess is that given more research, harmony with the biblical data will prevail as it always has in the past.

The land elevations of the pre-Flood world may not have exceeded one or two thousand feet (300 to 600 meters). High mountain ranges, not known before, arose as a consequence of the Flood catastrophe. We know this is reasonable because marine fossils are found at the top of every major moun-

tain range in the world in sedimentary strata including Mt. Everest. So the lower land elevations before the Flood are not merely conjecture but corroborated by marine fossils showing clearly that those areas were once at, or more probably below sea level.

Physical forces, impossible to adequately visualize, were exerted on our planet to "break up all the fountains of the great deep" (Genesis 7:11). The interior of the earth, under a crust of onion skin thickness, is mostly fluid. A distortion of the planet by a mere 1/10,000th of earth's diameter, could elevate ocean beds and lower continental masses to deluge the world with tsunamis in some areas hundreds of feet high, demolishing everything in their paths down to bedrock and deeper as seen on the map, then redepositing those sediments. Other areas may have had a more benign deluge with daily tidal inundations as the continent progressively sank in about six months with mobile life fleeing ever upward until overwhelmed. This may be part of the explanation why larger fossilized mammals, capable of withstanding horrible conditions and likely pursued back and forth by changing topography (now sinking, then rising again before sinking further and then finally overwhelmed) are found predominantly in the topmost Miocene strata, often in mass burials. All of this catastrophic destruction ruptured our planet in addition to the forty days and nights of torrential rainfall.

The biblical reference substantiating sinking and elevating (when the flooded world was returning to equilibrium) is Psalm 104:5-9 "*Who laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be moved forever? You (Yahweh) covered it with ocean as with a vesture; the waters stood above the mountains. At your rebuke they fled, at the voice of your thunder they hastened away (The mountains rose, the valleys sank down,) to the place where you founded for them. You have set a bound that they may not pass over; that they turn not again to cover the earth.*" (ASV modernized.) This rising of mountains and sinking of valleys occurred after the deluge—a record of the return toward equilibrium of the continents and ocean following the Flood—converse activity to the Flood's cause. The fact that at the interior areas of every continent there exists vast, virtually bare areas (shields) of Precambrian rock testifies to emerging continents from under water with sediments flowing outward like a swimmer's hair is splayed outward upon emerging from a dive. Hence the mostly bare areas observed near continental centers or edges on every continent. Forces inside the earth, possibly from a swallowed asteroid, shifted, warped and wrinkled the crust, thus creating the mountain ranges. Sediments carried beyond the continental margins by the great uplift probably created the continental shelves at the same time and increased ocean salinity.

Thus came the tectonics—great mountain chains and continental plateaus uplifted worldwide as the staggering planet began the return to equilibrium. The evidence on Mars, above referenced, of catastrophic volumes of raging waters in the past should give skeptics pause when questioning the credibility of a worldwide flood on earth. If all that Martian water once existed or is now stored somewhere underground, then it is easily believable that the earth might have had volumes of water above and within its crust which were unleashed volcanically at the time when "all the fountains of the great deep were broken up" (See Genesis 7:11 [with Amos 7:4-5 which allows fire beneath the earth as a fountain of the great deep] but read the complete story Genesis 6 through 9). An asteroidal impact as a trigger mechanism for this cataclysm is only a speculation. However, the media (February 21, 1997) reported scientists' claims of "proof positive" and "smoking gun" evidence for a similar but much smaller impact in the gulf of Mexico and more than two hundred impacts have been identified worldwide. Evolutionists want to say 65 million years ago, of course, for the dinosaur extinction date, but biblically and more sensibly it was a part of the great cataclysm of about five or six thousand years ago. The big impact which might have caused the Flood came earlier and is probably forever buried beyond recognition or concealed in an ocean bed if that may have been the Flood's direct cause.

A worldwide flood also precludes millions of years of post-Cambrian time. The Redwall intertongues with Muav in some places requiring fluid conditions, thus falsifying long ages for these formations. Because there is no scientific evidence to support post-Cambrian long ages but copious evidence for a global flood, the biblical record is corroborated securely. It is a simple explanation of today's observable geology. Complicated explanations are always less credible than simple ones (per Ockham's razor) if simple ones answer all the facts.

Evolutionary geologists have successfully disseminated faulty information based on their misinterpretation of the geologic column. I do not mean to suggest that this is deliberate mendacity because many of them sincerely believe the evolution story just as I once did myself. Because evolution is so pervasive, so universally believed by many of the world's brilliant minds it is difficult for anyone to accept most of the surface geology as being only five or six thousand years old, the result of the Genesis Flood. It is imperative that we understand the facts of geology—not the spin imposed on those facts by the misinformed academic world. Especially obscured have been the implications of the great unconformity—a flat erosion surface which is evidenced in many places all over the world and only explained by a universal deluge. Any difficulty believing this alternative explanation of geology is not an index of its credibility, but rather an index of the magnitude of the "veil cast over all nations," and the great flood of deceit spewing from the serpent's mouth (Revelation 12:15-17 - Job 1 and 2). Most of the mistakes (and the biggest ones) come from ignoring the fact of a global flood which changes just about everything and colors every interpretation.

The psychological pressure imposed on students to coerce belief in evolutionary geology is immense, almost overwhelming, but the fact is that "millions-of-years-ago" evolutionary geology exists only in the imagination of evolutionists and has no (that is zero) sound scientific basis.

The following explanatory paragraphs are identified by number on the cross sectional map of the Grand Canyon area supplied with this discussion. (Vertical is exaggerated 5 to 1.) This map and comments must be studied *carefully* and mastered until the global flood concept is seen and understood clearly in the Grand Canyon strata. Some of the conclusions listed below are disputed even among the creationist scientists. Stromatolites (large structures which appear to be made of blue-green algae) and which appear to be Precambrian is an example, debated among creationists. Modifications in the future can be expected, but the basic idea of worldwide Flood geology is firm and factual. We now turn our focus more centrally to the cross sectional map for a brief, basic explanation of the Grand Canyon strata.

1. Broken up, sometimes twisted and metamorphosed Precambrian strata – “the world that perished” (II Peter 3:6). No transported fossils are in this area and almost no fossils are found at all. The few that are found were part of the pristine creation, mostly microscopic, some being subsoil wormlike organisms in natural settings. The strata below the great unconformity (see #2) appear to have been originally well ordered, contrasting the universal chaos everywhere above this great erosion surface. Widespread faulting in the Precambrian shows that this well-ordered regime underwent catastrophe, upset, colossal sheet erosion and redeposition of new strata..

2. The “Great Unconformity”—world wide phenomenon created by the in rushing water over the sunken continent (Genesis 7 & 8). Much of the continental world was progressively wiped clean to bedrock by extensive sheet erosion, then those sediments were necessarily redeposited. Marine type fossils, transported and buried, would naturally dominate this redeposited zone. In the lowest strata above the great unconformity, phyla of every life form are abundant, and in mind boggling variety. So abundant and varied are these life forms that it has been named the “Cambrian Explosion” of life by evolutionists but it is really the earliest unload of suspended destruction residual to the great Flood. As such it is better named the Cambrian explosion of death—a vast graveyard of highly complex marine organisms. This lowest Cambrian zone even includes vertebrate forms. Complex life forms do not appear simply and gradually above this great erosion surface but suddenly, abundantly and under catastrophic burial conditions. The entire sedimentary world above the great unconformity is an immense burial ground. Because the strata below the great unconformity shows a destroyed world below it, we must look for causes and sources for the 350 million cubic miles of strata above it. That’s about 1500 million cubic km. of redeposited strata. This point must be fully grasped. It shows a destroyed order below it and a chaotic depositional graveyard above it. Remnants of the original created world are visible, but broken and tilted. Therefore, the enormous deposits above the great unconformity are later accumulations from horrendous, cataclysmic forces of redeposition. Please review this point carefully until fully grasped.

3. Part of the “fountains of the great deep” (Gen. 7:11). Great volcanic extrusions and explosions are within the meaning (Amos 7:4,5) because magmatic fissures are certainly “fountains” and certainly originate from the “great deep.” But the “fountains” may also reference the unstoppable tsunamis from a raging wild ocean, overwhelming the continent in many regions and a more benign deluge elsewhere. In any case, worldwide volcanic activity is included in the meaning of the phrase with lava flows totaling hundreds of thousands of square miles. Notice the flat lying sheet lava (within and at the base of San Francisco Peaks) which extended far beyond the peak area, now removed by secondary erosion. This depiction as well as the opposite side depiction near Cedar Breaks show that these intrusions and extrusions occurred during or following the Flood. Our planet has experienced some sort of terrestrial wreck and displays its bleeding wounds all over the globe.

4. The end of the water deposits caused by in rushing marine waters over the sunken continent and/or elevated ocean basins perhaps to the upper limit of zone 5, then immediately eroded down again in places by out rushing waters (continent rising) to this line 4. This is called the Permian boundary, quite a distinctive geologic division. This deposition/erosion sequence was perhaps mostly completed in the single year of the Flood although much activity may have continued for hundreds of years after Noah disembarked. Notice the very wide sheet erosion caused by widespread, sudden water movements with little evidence of even ten months of erosion time between strata. These erosion planes are similar to the great unconformity. We are talking big time erosive excavation. Sheet erosion only occurs from unthinkably immense, rapid water movements. Today’s limited water erosions tend to make gullies and canyons. Never does regional sheet erosion occur in areas including fossils of land based life.

5. This immense zone, from Permian to top of Cretaceous or perhaps above that, may have been deposited, then partly removed as the sunken continent began to rise again. See Psalm 104:5-9 quoted above. This is Psalm 103 in Russian or Catholic Bibles. Notice again the evidence for wide area sheet erosion, impossible to explain by slow and gradual processes.

6. Sediments from a long series of massive deposits. Please see the introductory paragraphs above regarding their formation. Some of the limestone became mixed in with the slurries like the sandy Muav dirty limestone, which indicates rapid deposition like the turbidites rather than static accumulations of precipitates. Some other limestones are quite pure. The very flat deposits of these massive slurries of all types are hydraulically sorted (that is, sorted by the floodwaters) into the various strata.

7. The limestones are not all necessarily transported but are formed by precipitation of calcium carbonate in seawater. Most precipitates occur as solutions are cooled but in the case of limestone (calcium carbonate) the solution precipitates when *warmed*. The great volcanic eruptions under the ocean created great volumes of calcium carbonate precipitate. It was probably like a violent snowstorm of calcium carbonate underwater, forming into limestone in various parts of the world on a grandiose scale, then transported and sorted with the other massive deposits. However, the pre-Flood world contained massive accumulations of limestone which were pulverized by the flood waters into particle size, sorted hydraulically into vast, moving regions of like materials and redeposited along with new carbonates created by the warm flood waters. A sort of cohesion seems to keep the vast regions in distinct units. The Redwall limestone has multiple intertongues with the Muav below, proving simultaneity. It contains great numbers of nautiloids (shelled organisms up to two feet in length and only a few inches in diameter found in Nautiloid canyon and 11 other areas) which are oriented in the same general direction. This indicates the presence of current flow at burial, incompatible with gradual deposition over long periods of time. The Redwall may have been sourced from pre-Flood limestone, pulverized into sand-grain size and redeposited along with newly formed limestone.

The population of crinoids, diatoms and other life forms which control the world’s oxygen levels may have comprised a complete world-filling inventory *during creation week* and some were fossilized in limestone and chert even before the Flood but most of the fossilization was Flood related.

8. Coal deposits caused by great floating log mats and uprooted and fragmented vegetation. The pre-Flood flora and fauna may have exceeded today’s inventory by several dozen times. Bark, roots and branches might sink to form peat while many of the larger logs kept floating and decayed. The peat, buried by massive found sediments, then deprived of oxygen and heated, became coal in a matter of months

or a few tens of years. Huge quantities of pre-Flood peat were probably disturbed, transported by flood-waters, sorted, redeposited, buried and coalified. Fossils of tall trees in vertical position, penetrating through several sequences of coal and sediment, (polystrate fossils) will not allow a slow development of coal from peat bogs over thousands or millions of years. No processes going on today can explain these colossal coal beds but a world wide flood provides a sensible mechanism.

9. Radioisotope dating techniques have failed to support millions of years of post Cambrian geology. In the Grand Canyon area, for one of many examples, the igneous rocks at the canyon bottom, give a rubidium/strontium date many millions of years younger than recent lava flows known to be only a few thousand years old which flow over the top of the canyon walls from the Uinkaret Plateau. All geologists agree that the lava flows on top of the canyon (9A) are recent. Native Americans may have witnessed some of these eruptions but the radioisotope date (rubidium/strontium) of these recent eruptions (of the Uinkaret Plateau not shown on this cross section) measure much older than the lowest Cardenas Lavas and diabase sills (9B) found within the very bottom Precambrian strata. Volcanos in Hawaii which erupted in the 19th century give isotope dates of many millions of years. It has been assumed that radiometric "clocks" are set to zero when magma is molten but that is not so. Some radioactive inclusions found in crystals within magma tend to survive the magma phase so when recrystallized into rock and then dated there is a considerable "inheritance of daughter elements" in the crystals from the magma source. Geologists may be essentially dating the age of the earth base materials, not the date of recrystallization.

The interior of earth (and all the terrestrial type planets) contains much radioactivity. If a terrestrial planet existed between Mars and Jupiter and was broken to fragments by a large cometary collision just before the Flood, and if as a consequence fragments crashed into all the planets including earth, precipitating the Flood, would not the newly deposited magmatic intrusions and Flood sediments be filled with extra terrestrial radioactivity, thus further skewing measurements and perhaps accelerating some disintegration such as U-235 fission? A far out conjecture, I admit, but worth answering.

Gunter Faure, who authored the first text for graduate students in radioisotope dating, acknowledges that in dating, "Discordances are the rule, not the exception." There are always a wide array of assumptions as well as measured discrepancies in all the isotope dating techniques. Someday, isotope dating may be a useful tool for science and radio carbon already is useful within a 4000 or 5000 year limit but at the present time, isotope dating, while it makes a good story, is simply not reliable. However it is difficult to look at the data without concluding that the earth *mineral base* is millions of years old.

A technical discussion which is rather breathtaking given at the 1998 International Conference on Creationism by Andrew Snelling concludes in discussing excessive Argon with mineral concentrates in recent eruptions, "these considerations call into question all Potassium/Argon 'dating' whether 'model' ages or 'isochron' ages and all Argon40/Argon39 ages that have been calibrated against Potassium/Argon dates." This recent paper (Pages 503-525 of the proceedings) is MUST reading for technical people on the dating subject. Obtain from Creation Science Fellowship, 705 Washington Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15229 USA. Since Potassium/Argon dating is the method of choice in dating ape and "humanoid" fossils, anthropological assumptions by evolutionists need to be reexamined and abandoned or revised.

The age of the universe and the earth mineral base is an altogether different question from the dating of fossils and the Flood. While creationists in general try to support a young universe (max 10,000 years), they do so from a wrong reading of two texts of Scripture. The universe and the earth base could be millions or billions of years old, biology and surface geology could not. (See *The Age of the Universe: What Are the Biblical Limits?* below.)

10. The ice age cannot be depicted on this cross section but it was caused by a significant increase in ocean temperature and a significant decrease in solar incidence on the continents. The great volcanic eruptions at the close of the Flood (including very active mid-ocean ridges) warmed the ocean and filled the atmosphere with volcanic debris, chilling the non-equatorial continents in a continuous winter for many years. But precipitation was greatly increased due to warm ocean temperatures. The ocean was warmed by the same volcanic eruptions which provided the dust clouds to cool the continents all over the globe. This resulted in a global "lake effect" which loaded two hemispheres at much of their upper latitudes with year-around snow. The ice age was a post-Flood phenomenon and may have lasted over large areas for a few hundred years. Job, one of the oldest post-Flood biblical patriarchs, even though he resided in what is now hot and dry Middle East, talks much of ice, snow, hail, frozen ocean surfaces and intense cold.

11. All geologists agree that high mountains and all the mountain ranges are late in geologic history. From a biblical view they are part of the Flood catastrophism, probably at its close or just following the cataclysm. Before the Flood, the highest elevation anywhere on the globe may have been no more than one or two thousand feet (300-600 meters) with no high mountains at all as shown by abundant marine fossils at the tops of every major mountain range. The extensive mountain ranges world wide were lifted fairly rapidly after the Genesis Flood, at least enough area for Noah, et al, to disembark. The rest of mountains may have lifted up over several hundred years following the Flood. The mountain rearing probably took place about five or six thousand years ago possibly by continental "collisions" and oceanic plate subductions on a global scale or just global shivers from a swallowed asteroid. Mountain ranges of this type are not depicted on this cross section.

12. Extensive beds of continental dimensions of a single massive slurry are best explained by a world wide catastrophic flood. The Coconino sandstone covers 200,000 square miles (520,000 sq. km.) up to 300 feet (almost 100 meters) deep. The Morrison formation, rich in dinosaur fossils, covers 400,000 square miles, 100 feet thick. Coal beds cover as much as 160,000 square miles of thin seams. The St. Petersburg sandstone blankets much of North America and parts of Europe with over one million square miles of deposits in thin layers. The Supai group reaches from Pennsylvania to Arizona, just to name a few extensive beds. Any of these are difficult (actually impossible) to explain without postulating a deluge of global proportions. Uniformitarian explanations fail miserably to account for their existence.

13. The geological column as partially present in Southwestern United States. Most of the column, Cambrian and above, was deposited in the year of the Genesis Flood. Some of the uppermost deposits may have been post-Flood.

The assignment of dates to the geologic column has not fulfilled the standards of objective science. The ancient dates assigned to the column laid the foundation for the theory of evolution but have no good science for their support. Evolutionists want billions of years for geologic processes but a close look at world geology supports rapid everything, Cambrian and above, with some minor variations.

14a. Widespread faulting occurred before and after the Flood. This "before Flood" faulting may mark the beginning when the "fountains of the great deep were broken up," thus inaugurating the Flood.

14b. This "after Flood" faulting occurred as the world was returning to equilibrium following the greatest physical event within human history. Even today, the earth is not fully normalized.

15. The distribution of animal fossils throughout these vast deposits is explained by hydraulic sorting, ecological zonation, differential buoyancy of carcasses, and, to an extent, mobility of animal species. Evolutionists claim a gradual progression of biota reflecting the progress of evolution, but the discovery of pine pollen in the Precambrian Hakatai shale (please note location in the Precambrian) would utterly invalidate the theory of evolution. (This discovery is disputed by evolutionists and does need further corroboration.) It is true that there is a pattern in fossil location but not necessarily simple to complex and not necessarily the pattern claimed by evolutionists. Bacteria do not exhibit such a succession, invertebrates do not, nor do the plants show such a pattern. The Cambrian explosion of fossils includes every phyla including vertebrates—totally discordant with evolutionary theory but totally concordant to Flood geology. What appear to be bear and bird tracks and even "simian" appearing footprints and one print that looks "uncannily like a large human hand" was reported in the Smithsonian magazine July 1992 p 70ff. These are all found in Permian supposedly 280 million years old, long before bears and birds to say nothing of simians or humans were supposed to exist. Problem fossils like those need more study for sure but are easily understood by the creationist view. (See Roth, 28, Chapter 10)

The "Cambrian explosion" of life forms (Cambrian here represented by the Tapeats sandstone, Bright Angel shale and Muav limestone) is really unanswerable by evolutionists and involves extremely complex life forms at the lowest zone including vertebrates. The fossils within these phanerozoic formations follow a sensible pattern depending on their ecological location. For example, heavier shelled bottom dwelling ocean creatures are found, predictably, at the lower levels. Land dwelling mammal fossils tend to be found above the Permian boundary as the waters began to recede, exposing continental ground. Bloated carcasses may have floated in the various formations according to a decomposed, gas-laden density unique to each animal kind. I Corinthians 15:39 states, "For not all flesh is alike, but there is one kind for men, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish." Is it possible that bloated carcasses float according to this "kind of flesh" here enumerated and have found a natural location which gives the illusion of progression upward? See Roth's book, *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture*, page 169 referenced below. Those enormous reptiles, the dinosaurs, mostly vegetarian, required a huge ecosystem to support their diet, yet the dinosaur yielding formations have no evidence of such ecosystems. Instead these reptiles are buried in sandstone with volcanic ash above, sometimes below and a small part mixed within with almost no vegetable material. Vegetable material throughout is buried mostly in seams, often coalified with almost no bones in those seams.

16. Multiple intertongues at the Muav/Redwall contact prove conclusively that these great units were deposited in mobile waters and that any hiatus, let alone 100 to 200 million years between is utterly impossible. Interbedding exists between many other formations as well. (See photocopy.)

Mammoths may be post-Flood and are found in the latest deposits including ice age deposits.

It is certainly possible that a large asteroid impacted the Earth, directed by the hand of God in a terrible judgment. "I, even I do bring a flood upon the earth, to destroy all flesh wherein is the breath of life." (Genesis 6:17). An asteroidal impact, *undeniably a possibility*, could provide a mechanism for so great an upheaval as the Genesis Flood. An impact may have split the earth's crust into plates like a shattered egg shell thus triggering widespread volcanic devastation. After all, the interior of the earth is mostly fluid or plastic and the solid crust is only like an onion skin relatively. Plus, before day three, the continents were flooded in the beginning so why contest the Scripture in chapter seven? The energy involved in an impact is easily calculable for various sizes of bolides but the consequences are not easy to predict at all. The Bible tells of this judgment but does not tell us about the trigger, so an asteroid is guesswork although made plausible by the ubiquitous impact craters within the solar system. But *something* catastrophic happened about five or six thousand years ago which also may have left impact craters throughout the solar system. It is impossible to adequately visualize the magnitude of the Flood catastrophe and whatever may have triggered it.

There is a wide range of geologic signatures throughout the world but all of them can be explained and are best explained by a worldwide cataclysm of flood waters. This geologic cross sections should be studied carefully because there is a wealth of information in it, but there are many variations of this depiction throughout the world. When the recent worldwide flood interpretation is firmly grasped for geology, the result is a sensible, scientifically reasonable model in perfect harmony with Scripture as well as with raw data. One leaves the investigation with the conviction that every jot and tittle of Scripture is inspired by God. But we must reject the dating assignments depicted on this cross-section. An easy way to remember is substitute "yarns" for "years" on these otherwise excellent maps. I don't mean to level accusations or appear unkind with that but the dates are simply in error.

It is clear that asteroidal impacts cannot possibly be slow and gradual, lava flows in their nature cannot be slow and gradual over millions of years, deposits from regional moving slurries cannot be slow and gradual over millions of years. Volcanic deposits in their nature cannot be slow and gradual as they unload their material. Limestone deposits *could* be slow and gradual but not with Nautiloids oriented by current flow embedded in them, not when intertongued with the Muav below and not without containing abundant erosional and biologic evidence for periodic lengthy waiting times between strata. The Muav limestone mixed with sand indicates a turbidite like transport and if so it was not slow and gradual either like the Tapeats and Bright Angel of the same formation. River deltas are another example that could be and probably have been slow and gradual although greatly accelerated just after the Flood.

The Coconino sandstone is regarded by creationists as water deposited but evolutionists claim it as desert drifting sands. Thus it could be a slow process if wind blown but must be rapid if it is water deposited. This paper recognizes the evidence for the water borne nature of the Coconino from the angle of its cross-bedding. That indicates water transport and quadruped tracks are found which could hardly be preserved in desert sand. See Steve Austin's book referenced above. The conclusion is that the entire column was deposited quickly with only a few deposits debatable, and in creationist minds, those few are not convincing at all. Gradual deposits prevail today only after the main catastrophism was completed a few thousand years ago. All the activity may have taken several hundred years to complete even though Noah disembarked after 400 days to the first exposed land.

Let the reader appraise the foregoing. Surely an asteroidal impact is possible, no one could deny that. But if not asteroid, then *something* has wrecked our planet so we ask the question. Is it plausible? In my mind catastrophic events bring far more explanatory power than alternatives. No doubt opponents will imagine difficulties to this model. That is assumed and it is fine if accompanied with factual evidence. I am sure that any difficulties do not compare with the impossibilities of uniformitarian, gradualistic ideas for accomplishing the present state of things.

Evolution is impossible for many, many reasons. Following are a few highlights mentioned only briefly as *assertions*. Any of these assertions can be documented fully but most of them are close to self-evident anyway. Assertions prove nothing, but they can be valuable heuristically by inviting further investigation by any who want to find out the truth.

The laws of mathematical probability will not allow evolution and a simple protein molecule could not evolve from a supposed "primordial soup" even if the world were 900 trillion years old. Evolution is impossible from the laws of thermodynamics, the most solid of all laws of science. Entropy always increases. Everything tends to disorder. Order comes only through intelligent activity. Crystal growth is a function of the original atomic structure and only represents the releasing of the order already resident in the atomic structure. Not only is spontaneous generation of orderly systems never found anywhere but spontaneous dissolution of ordered systems into disorder is an inexorable law, ubiquitous and without exceptions. Mutations never result in a net increase in complexity and therefore cannot be, as evolutionists suppose, the driving force of evolution. The fossil record demonstrates stubbornly unchanging rigidity of life forms within the range of each genetic pool and the gaps between major divisions are real and immense. There are no transitional forms. Even after 140 years of intense research, none have been found. When evolutionists cite variations within the normal or extreme range of each gene pool (which is all the viable variations that ever occur) they have not shown proof of evolution but variation within species (or genus). All agree, dogs and people come in a wide range of morphology but are nonetheless all of the same species. Large variations in anthropoid skull shapes are easily explained by looking at the skulls of that dog species—all one species but enormous variation in shape. So it is not surprising that we have Pygmies, Swedes, Mongolians, Eskimos and South Sea Islanders with a wide variation in skull shape even today in our human species—all variations within a common gene pool. Similarities in morphology across genus or species lines only prove that God is a God of order.

There are literally trillions and trillions of complex designs throughout the biological world and in the astronomical and atomic worlds as well. Not one of these intricate wonders could design itself, not even one or if "evolved" but merely *guided* by God, we must ask why a loving God chose such a ruthless method of creating life? To accuse God of doing that is nothing less than idolatry. Each organism involves numerous designs with "irreducible complexity" (Michael Behe referenced below) which means that nothing works until everything works which precludes slow and gradual evolution. A partial wing is a liability, not an advantage for that life form. The discovery of E-coli's flagellum propulsion mechanism with multiple rotary electronic motors, reduction gear systems and right angle drive shafts all packaged in a microscopic envelope is simply unanswerable. So also is metamorphosis, symbiosis, pre-programmed migratory patterns, DNA coding and trillions of other complex designs. All of which speak eloquently of a supernatural intelligence who invented them all. Evolution has no real science for its support and is better compared to *fact-free science fiction*. It is a hitchhiker on science, wearing the clothing, using the language and surrounded by some good quality science in related areas, but without even a single item which can withstand the rigors of hard scientific scrutiny for authentication of evolution itself. It has contributed nothing to hard factual science but operates as a parasite. Theistic evolution is a gross idolatry when it pictures God as creator through death, struggle, tooth, claw and the survival of the brutist. Violent tooth and claw came to be as a consequence of our great rebellion against God in the garden. (Genesis 9:2 Romans 8:20-22 Isaiah 11:6-9) To picture God using the mechanism of lethal competition for the creation of all life is an offense to Jesus Christ the Creator who is love incarnate.

Again, the *facts* are not in dispute, but only the interpretation of the facts. It will be rewarding if the reader does some independent research on each assertion which may need corroboration. Here are some recommended books to help start the process.

My top recommendation is Dr. Ariel Roth's book, *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture*, published by Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D.C., 20039-0555. It is a very fair-minded treatise, readable and well documented. Dr. Harold Coffin's book, *Origin by Design*, is also helpful for a much better corroboration of these assertions, also published by Review and Herald. Dr. Coffin is a paleontologist and geologist of high caliber with deep confidence in the testimony of Scripture. These authors happen to be Seventh Day Adventist, some of whom seem to put quite an emphasis on these subjects. Another book relating directly to the Grand Canyon is *The Grand Canyon—Monument to Catastrophe*, edited by geologist Steven Austin. Austin's book is available from the Institute for Creation Research, Box 2667, El Cajon, CA 92021. These books are MUST reading for any serious student. Then, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*, by Michael Denton, *Darwin's Black Box*, by Michael Behe and *Darwin on Trial*, by Philip Johnson are beginning books against Darwinian Evolution. There are many other convincing books and articles on this important subject. Many authoritative, and verifiable supporting sources are available if the referenced books are inadequate.

This publication including the geological cross section map of the Grand Canyon, essential to the numbered references above is available from Morningstar Publications, Washougal, WA 98671-1209 USA \$8.00 ppd. Hardship discount - (Free offer - inquire 360-835-8361.)

Gorman Gray

APPENDIX D

Dictionary Aid to Words of Critical Importance

Italicized English words in Strong's dictionary give the most basic, usual meaning. Alphabetized words following the colon are the renditions of that word in the King James Version. The "H" number refers to a Hebrew dictionary listing in the concordance. The "X" symbol denotes a rendering in the KJV that results from an idiom peculiar to the Hebrew. Readers who are interested in pursuing word meanings further should consult lexicons such as Brown-Driver-Briggs or Davies (See bibliography, items 1 and 2). Comparison of the usage of words elsewhere in Scripture can be illuminating and equally as fruitful as the use of lexicons. Words are listed as encountered in Genesis 1. The translation chosen must fit the various contexts.

(1) H1254 **bara'**, *baw-raw'*; a prim. root; (absol.) *to create*; (qualified) *to cut down (a wood), select, feed (as formative processes)*:-choose, create (creator), cut down, dispatch, do, make (fat).

(2) H8064 **shamayim**, *shaw-mah'-yim*; dual of an unused sing. *shameh, shaw-meh'*; from an unused root mean. *to be lofty*; the sky (as *aloft*, the dual perh. alluding to the visible arch in which the clouds move, as well as to the higher ether where the celestial bodies revolve):-air, X astrologer, heaven (-s).

(3) H776 **'erets**, *eh'-rets*; from an unused root prob. mean. *to be firm; the earth (at large or partitively a land)*:-X common, country, earth, field, ground, land, X nations, way, + wilderness, world.

(4) H8414 **tohuw**, *to'-hoo*; from an unused root mean. *to lie waste; a desolation (of surface), i.e. desert, fig. a worthless thing; adv. in vain*:-confusion, empty place, without form, nothing, (thing of) nought, vain, vanity, waste, wilderness.

(5) H922 **bohuw**, *bo'-hoo*; from an unused root (mean. *to be empty*); a vacuity, i.e. (superficially) an undistinguishable *ruin*:-emptiness, void.

(6) H8415 **tehowm**, *teh-home'*; or **tehom**, *teh-home'*; (usually fem.) from 1949; an *abyss* (as a *surging mass of water*), espec. the deep (the *main sea* or the *subterranean water-supply*):-deep (place), depth.

(7) H7363 **rachaph**, *raw-khaf'*; a prim. root; *to brood; by impl. to be relaxed*:-flutter, move, shake.

(8) H216 **'owr**, *ore*; from 215; *illumination* or (concr.) *luminary* (in every sense, including *lightning, happiness, etc.*):-bright, clear, + day,

light (- ning), morning, sun.

(9) H7549 **raqiya'**, *raw-kee'-ah*; from 7544; prop. an *expanse*, i.e. the *firmament* or (apparently) visible arch of the sky:-firmament.

(10) H6213 **'asah**, *aw-saw'*; a prim. root; to *do* or *make*, in the broadest sense and widest application (as follows):-accomplish, advance, appoint, apt, be at, become, bear, bestow, bring forth, bruise, be busy, X certainly, have the charge of, commit, deal (with), deck, + displease, do, (ready) dress (-ed), (put in) execute (-ion), exercise, fashion, + feast, [fight-] ing man, + finish, fit, fly, follow, fulfil, furnish, gather, get, go about, govern, grant, great, + hinder, hold ([a feast]), X indeed, + be industrious, + journey, keep, labour, maintain, make, be meet, observe, be occupied, offer, + officer, pare, bring (come) to pass, perform, practise, prepare, procure, provide, put, requite, X sacrifice, serve, set, show, X sin, spend, X surely, take, X throughly, trim, X very, + vex, be [warr-] ior, work (-man), yield, use.

(11) H3974 **ma'owr**, *maw-ore'*; or
ma'or, *maw-ore'*; also (in plur.) fem.

me'owwah, *meh-o-raw'*; or

me'orah, *meh-o-raw'*; from 215; prop. a *luminous body* or *luminary*, i.e. (abstr.) *light* (as an element); fig. *brightness*, i.e. *cheerfulness*; spec. a *chandelier*.-bright, light.

(12) H5414 **nathan**, *naw-than'*; a prim. root; to *give*, used with great latitude of application (*put*, *make*, etc.):-add, apply, appoint, ascribe, assign, X avenge, X be ([healed]), bestow, bring (forth, hither), cast, cause, charge, corne, commit, consider, count, + cry, deliver (up), direct, distribute, do, X doubtless, X without fail, fasten, frame, X get, give (forth, over, up), grant, hang (up), X have, X indeed, lay (unto charge, up), (give) leave, lend, let (out), + lie, lift up, make, + O that, occupy, offer, ordain, pay, perform, place, pour, print, X pull, put (forth), recompense, render, requite, restore, send (out), set (forth), shew, shoot forth (up), + sing, + slander, strike, [sub-] mit, suffer, X surely, X take, thrust, trade, turn, utter, + weep, X willingly, + withdraw, + would (to) God, yield.

APPENDIX E

LANGUAGE CHALLENGE FOR HEBREW STUDENTS

Imagine several twelve-year-old children whose native language is biblical Hebrew, playing in the park. Each fully understands the others without the slightest doubt. Then comes a seminary professor with graduate degrees in Hebrew, joining them in the conversation. He understands the words, but occasionally wonders if a child uses a pronoun illatively or relatively, or if it is a construct verb or an absolute. So he asks the children. They say, "What?" After considerable dialogue the children explain that everyone knows well enough what everyone else *means* even though the professor has to resort to grammar and syntax.

The children develop a rapport with the professor and find his approach to language amusing as he analyzes everything grammatically which they consider awkward. One of the professor's friends, who also knows classroom Hebrew, joins the company. The children see the two experts often engaged in technical discussions about what they (the children) have been saying. On one occasion the two experts ask the children what they mean by one of their sentences. Why use the accusative? Please define *tohu*. Why did they choose the piel?

The children laugh when they discover the various options considered by the learned scholars. Finally, one articulate child explains their amusement. "You appear to understand what we say only after you have assembled the skeleton, so to speak, while we get the picture of what we mean with the 'kangaroo' all fleshed out. We don't bother with the skeleton like you do. We know the skeleton is there, but we can predict what it would look like from the overall picture which everyone understands. This makes wrong interpretations almost impossible."

Their cultural heritage gives the children an advantage which does about half of the interpretation. Automatic excluding, including, limiting and nuancing, routinely occur in ways difficult to analyze by a student trained in school. One would be hard-pressed to choose the graduate Doctors to interpret a passage of Scripture over the better nuanced children.

To be sure, the playground example may oversimplify the language problem. But could it be possible to get a good understanding of Scripture by grasping the overall picture without analyzing the skeleton? Indeed, this might provide a *safer* method of interpretation, in some ways, especially if experts can examine the skeleton as well, and confirm that it suits the fleshed-out model.

Some interpretations in this book have been partly suggested by others before me.** I want to present this work in its total contribution for examination of its “skeleton” by experts. At the end of this appendix I will list a few matters crucial to the interpretation in which Hebrew grammar and syntax are important for determination of the “skeleton.” I have consulted with a total of seven experts in the Hebrew language in the course of this study but I want to extend it to a wider range of examination.

This edition is a very short-run, preliminary work (August, 2003), with a need for further peer review. My thesis is derived from the study of the English text, aided by the use of multiple translations, lexicons and dictionaries. I know nothing of the Hebrew language technically. My arguments are established by gaining a *general picture from the Bible*, using the dictionary and lexical aids coupled with a beggarly posture of prayer to God.

Can legitimate conclusions be drawn by amateurs—conclusions which can withstand the scrutiny of brilliant minds with impeccable academic credentials in the original languages? We are dealing with a prominent biblical subject which has been argued and contested by the best thinkers. Is such confidence, coming from a nonspecialist, the result of an arrogant disregard for scholarship? Let it be clearly understood.

No, I have a high regard for formal training in the original languages of Scripture. We are heavily indebted to the work of many scholars whenever we use any translation of Scripture. But as this book is reviewed by those scholars with excellent training and top academic degrees, any errors in interpretation, if they exist, should become glaring and irrefutable. If they do not appear, it should provide strong support for the validity of my thesis. Confidence in the soundness of my conclusions impels me to *predict* that those conclusions *will withstand* the penetrating gaze of the best scholarship available today, in spite of this book’s humble origin.

After theories are formed, predictions can be made which test their validity. Einstein made a series of predictions about the perihelion of Mercury, the frequency of light originating in a strong gravitational field, and the displacement of light sources passing by a massive object, all based on his relativity theory. These predictions were dramatically confirmed after 1916.

Can a *biblical* interpretation be tested by making some predictions? Probably not in any precise way. But I propose a test—surprisingly—based upon my ignorance of the Hebrew language. This will be both a defense for me as an author and a protection for my readers. At the end of chapter 10 I have suggested possible *physical* tests; this one is based on *language*. Here are the proposed ground rules.

**E.g. Halley's Handbook, (pp 58-61) Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI 1962 His view agrees partly with this book.

If I have stated anything which, by the consensus of the expert linguists, violates grammar, syntax or definition in Hebrew (and therefore cannot be allowed), then I must concede that point or even the basic theme. Disqualified would be the opinions of individual grammarians or those from a sectarian segment of scholarship, unless unanimity is found outside that sect or persuasion. There must be a strong consensus over the entire range of theological positions as a matter of language without doctrinal considerations. The likelihood that I could develop the thesis without violating some well-understood rule, is really quite small unless the interpretation is the true one. Given zero knowledge of Hebrew grammar, to offer a somewhat new interpretation without violating *something* seems unlikely in the extreme, like dancing through a field saturated with land mines without tripping one, when there is only a single safe path.

A successful prediction might indicate that the path I have taken has avoided every land mine *by the nature of the chosen path* in spite of my stated ignorance of the mine field. The best explanation of such success would have to be that a correct aerial picture of the valley itself has revealed to me a safe path through the dangerous field within that valley (the mine field of intense grammatical analysis) which could not be visible from a perspective within the valley floor.

When an interpretation answers every major problem, when everything fits everywhere, with no apologies or rationalizations for a single word in the text or a single verifiable fact of science, a strong confidence is generated that this interpretation is correct. It is open for inspection, and criticism is welcome. Truth, by its nature, can take any opposition, any assault, and will be stronger as a result.

Accordingly, attempts to overthrow this interpretation or to point out weaknesses are cordially invited. Weaknesses may, indeed, exist. We can and we must remain friends while we are in the process of discovery. To have missed some things by not knowing Hebrew is probable. To have missed the main message, I will concede only after demonstration by a consensus of a wide range of Hebrew experts. It may prove appropriate and reassuring if a non-expert has been able to prevail among a multitude of experts simply by reading the translated texts carefully as any Bible reader is privileged to do.

I commend this work, therefore, to the most rigorous of tests, grammatically, exegetically, logically and scientifically. If the test I have proposed is unsatisfactory, I invite readers to devise their own. We must establish the biblical limits for the age of the universe in a way worthy of the Lord and also in harmony with demonstrable science.

Points of Grammar and Syntax.

The body of this book has emphasized etymological and semantic considerations influencing interpretations. Following are some questions whose answers involve conventions and usages (grammar and syntax) found in biblical Hebrew, and which are necessary to establish an interpretation.

1) One critic insists that “Let there be light” using the jussive (imperative) proves that the stellar heavens could not have existed (giving off light) before day one, for the implication from jussive is that light came to be where there was no light before. But because I happily acknowledge that light did not exist before day one *in the location specified* (namely, on the surface of the ocean) his objection is fully met. Also, a poll of numerous Hebrew department heads finds my critic lonely in his view that the creation of the heavens and earth is linguistically forced as a part of day one.

2) Another critic objected to my attempt to link “asah” to the English “did” for Genesis 1:16 (God “did” the greater and lesser light and the stars also). The verb is transitive when there are direct objects (as indicated with definite nouns by the particle “et,”) making the translation “did,” in his view, most inappropriate.

Well, of course, it is awkward and inappropriate in English. But my effort in suggesting “did” as one of many options for Genesis 1:16 is to illustrate the widely general nature of “asah” (as a transitive verb) and to remove the temptation to nuance that verb as “to create.” Many options are suitable for “asah” in this context, including “brought forth.” Because the first sight of buds and blossoms bursting from a tree resemble the first sight of stars, to render “asah” as “brought forth” in this verse seems appropriate. Many versions commonly render Job 14:9, “at the scent of water (a dry root) will *bring forth* branches and bud...” This is one of several examples where “asah” is rendered “bring forth” for budding plants. In English we “do” dishes and laundry in a transitive use. The dishes were not “made” by “doing” them and neither were the stars.

An ounce of understanding is worth a pound of grammar and syntax, as long as the understanding does not violate the conventions of grammar and syntax. Even further, an ounce of understanding is worth a ton of grammar and syntax if some basic assumptions are leading the interpretation astray. The example above shows how translations of widely applied words *must be context driven* primarily. Contextual sense is available to anyone who understands the passage with or without knowledge of the original language. A language expert who misses points of context is not as competent as one working from translations but who gets the big picture right. Best of all, of course, is the language expert who also gets the big picture right. But context is sovereign for establishing

the meaning and, with care, anyone can determine that.

3) The *waw disjunctive* versus *waw consecutive* is important for interpreting verses one, two and three. *Waw* functions similar to our English conjunctions, and can be *disjunctive* (similar to copulative) or *consecutive* depending on whether it is joined to a noun clause or a verb clause and with some other considerations. Only one disjunctive *waw* occurs in the entire first chapter of Genesis and that is at the beginning of verse two which explains why some translators render verse two, "Now the earth was..." rather than "and" or "then." Weston Fields makes a strong point of this in his effort to prove that the so called "gap theory" (ruin reconstruction of an assumed former creation sandwiched between verse one and verse two) is not allowed grammatically. To be allowed the conjunction would have to be consecutive, "Then the earth became deserted and empty..." (14, pp 81-86). But it is not consecutive but disjunctive, hence cannot be translated "then."

One theologian attempted to use the conjunction argument against the undefined age view of this book, thinking that the "biosphere theory" of this book requires an interval of time between verse one and two in the same way that the gap theory (ruin reconstruction) requires. But rather, my theme has specifically denied an indication of sequence of events in that zone but allows it between verse two and verse three (because darkness on the ocean is not defined in duration). At verse three the *consecutive* conjunction is used and most appropriately. "Darkness was on the surface of the ocean. And the Spirit of God is brooding over the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light." This is an example where the overall picture was able to guide the reader and avoid the land mine of the "*waw disjunctive*" coercion. Gap theory detonates that land mine—young biosphere theory avoids it securely. Rather than forbidding undefined age it permits and confirms it instead.

This is important enough to quote from Fields.

We must first decide what sort of *waw* it is that stands for the first letter in Genesis 1:2. the *waw* under consideration is either *waw consecutive* or *waw copulative*. *Waw consecutive* expresses sequence of time (this happened and then this happened, and next this happened.) It is the type of *waw* used in Genesis 1:3: "And God said."

Fields goes on to explain that Genesis 1:2 uses *waw disjunctive* which only adds explanatory details to the story. Thus verse two merely describes the earth named in verse one. It so happens that this also destroys the "summary" idea for verse one. It is not a summary because actual hardware is being described in verse two—not just topical ideas.

Mr. Fields directs his words against "gap theory" but in doing so he fortifies the thesis of this book. In chapter one I stated,

"this interpretation is not to be confused with 'gap theory' (ruin reconstruction) which supposes a creation of organic life long before the six days. Such a pre-six day creation of life cannot be allowed. No sequence of events is indicated between verse 1 and 2 as required by gap theory but time is allowed between verse 2 and 3"

However helpful his remarks regarding the conjunction, I must insist that his translation of *tohu wabohu* ("unformed and unfilled" and the title of his book) is not acceptable in its first word. The subtraction method (page 28-29) irresistibly forces the world conditions before the first day to include a fully formed and functioning planet commensurate with the rest of the heavens. Unfilled is okay—unformed is not.

4) Many expositors look at Genesis 1:1 as a merism—two contrasting words united by "and," (creating a singular thought). Examples are "up and down," "hill and vale." Verse 1 is more likely a hendiadys (Greek, "one through two")—two nouns like "stars and stripes" means flag. "Heaven and earth," then, may mean "everything." Merisms, like the hendiadys, always have to employ *two* items in the very nature of both. Verse one may be so regarded but an important distinction arises in Exodus 20:11 and Psalm 135:6-7. Adding a third element "sea" destroys both merism or hendiadys for the very nature of both requires two and always two either polar opposites or contrasting nouns.

This forces both references just cited to mean "air, land and sea" as I have claimed in chapter three. "Heaven and earth" in Genesis 1:1 refers to the entire cosmos, for neither air nor sea nor land existed at that moment, and the rules for hendiadys are fully met and the context permits. However, "heaven and earth and sea" in Exodus 20:11 and Psalm 135 cannot be other than "air, land and sea" as deliberately defined by God Himself during days one through three. "Sea" simply does not fit in the same context as "universe," but air, land and sea fit nicely. The following expression "and all that is in them" (Exodus 20:11) includes the biological world which resides exclusively in the air, land and sea. Psalm 135:7 "vapors ascending from the ends of the earth," "lightning for the rain," and "wind out of his treasures" all relating to planet earth weather functions, which clearly mandates "air, land, sea and the ocean" for the previous verse 6, perfectly parallel with Exodus 20:11. Exodus 31:17 uses "heaven and earth" but cannot refer to the entire cosmos either because the reference specifies work during the six days where God, Himself defines both entities as "air" and "land." Further, it is a reiteration of chapter 20:11. Creation of the cosmos stands outside the six day activity from a plain reading of Genesis 1:1-3.

It is my opinion that every problem has been met on every front and relieved creationists from their most difficult problems. Those who object are invited to engage in friendly dialogue.

Gorman Gray

APPENDIX F CREATION STORY FOR KINDERGARTEN

One of the strong indicators of the validity of any interpretation is shown if the Bible can be told simply to any child and easily understood by them just as it is written, and also be perfectly valid for the adult version. But the *translation* used for children must match the original sense fairly—without conformity to an historical precedent and with nothing slanted to suit a favored interpretation.

Some in kindergarten may not know words like ocean, earth and creation, so that must be determined first. For kindergarten children we must tell them how it is, without proof. They learn on our elder authority but it is good to start them thinking about how we know the Bible is true and the more technical questions in juvenile terms. Here below we will just tell them that the Bible is God's word, so that is how we know about creation.

The teacher should have samples of seeds, plants and animals, and pictures of birds flying in the air and larger animals. A vacuum cleaner reversed for blowing or a strong fan should illustrate expanse of air for the children (blow it on them).

Ideally, on a heavily overcast day, the children should look at the sky and be reminded, "This is how the first day must have looked like. Light was there but the sun could not be seen in the daytime and the stars could not be seen at night time through the clouds." Then when the sun is out, "This is how the fourth day looked like, bright and shiny and at night we can see the stars."

Day three can be illustrated with a wide cake pan of water tilted up on blocks at one end with submerged rocks at the other end fixed so they will not slide. Then, when the blocks are removed from the water-only end, and very slowly leveled, that end will get deeper and the rocks will "appear."

The teacher should try to make the Scripture distinct from the comments. Comments are certainly needed for kindergarten but the children should know when the teacher is giving a comment and when the Bible is being quoted. The Bible text can be posted and referred to when quoting. Pointing to each word as it is being spoken dramatizes for the children that the words are spoken by God.

Creation Story for Kindergarten

How did the earth begin? The sun, the moon and the stars—where did they come from? Were they always shining? Who made the ocean and the mountains? Who made the clouds and the trees?

Who made the birds and all the animals? Have you been to the zoo to see all the interesting animals? Who made the flowers and the grass? Who made you and me and all the people? Were people always here? How can we know these things?

God has given us a book, the Bible, which tells us all we need to know about creation. Let's read it directly from what God has said. Now I am reading from the Bible.

In the beginning, first of all, God created the sky and the earth. And the earth was deserted and empty. And darkness was on top of the ocean. Desereted means that nothing was living on the earth. There was no land anywhere but only ocean. Not even any light at all could be seen but it was dark everywhere on the ocean. The Bible says that there was a *cloud of thick darkness all around the earth like a blanket wrapped around a baby* and that cloud must have made the earth completely dark. Can you imagine not having any light at all for a whole year or for many years? No one knows how long it was dark because God did not tell us that, but it might have been dark for a long time.

Can you imagine nothing but water everywhere and not even any dry ground and no light at all to see with? The Bible says that *The Spirit of God hovered over the ocean.* Hover means like a mother bird sits on her eggs. Did you know that a mother bird sits on her eggs for a long, long time until the baby birds are hatched? Birds can sit for a long time patiently, waiting for the baby birds to hatch.

Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw the light that it was good. And God divided the light from the darkness. God called the light Day and the darkness he called Night. There was evening and morning -- Day one.

God must have made the cloud of thick darkness not so thick now so light could get through. That was the very first day. You all know how it gets day time and then it gets night time don't you?

The ocean was no longer dark except at night time. That must have been a wonderful thing to see light after it had been dark for so long. Suddenly God spoke and the ocean was no longer dark. But you could not see the sun or the moon or the stars. But now there was light to see, and that was good.

But still there were no plants or animals. There was not any dry land for the trees to grow in and where animals could live. There was not even any air to breathe. Try taking a deep breath of

air right now. Can you imagine not having any air to breathe? There was nothing but ocean and the thick water cloud above the ocean. That's all. No land and no air, only water on the ocean and a thick water cloud above the ocean. Light could get through to the ocean now like it is on a foggy day or a rainy day. But there was no air to breathe yet.

Then God said, “Let there be an expanse between the ocean below and the water cloud above the ocean.” And that’s what happened. The expanse was like the air and the wind. You know how the wind blows hard sometimes? I will turn on this fan for us to feel the air. God created the expanse and He divided the water of the ocean from the water cloud above the ocean. *God called the expanse “Air.”* So we have air today and you and I can breathe and the birds can fly in the air. But there were no animals yet, no birds or people and not even any butterflies or rabbits or any living thing. There was not any dry ground either but there was air now. We would all die if we could not breathe. Even plants and trees could not live without air. *So there was evening and morning and that was the second day.*

Then God said, “Let the waters under the air be gathered together in one place and let dry land appear.” And that’s what happened. And God called the dry land, “Earth,” and the place where the waters were gathered together He called “Seas.” And God saw that it was good. So that’s how God made the dry land. It was wet land at first, under the ocean but then God made part of the ocean lots deeper into a sea and when the water sank down into that deep sea, that made the land to appear. Watch the pan of water when we let down one side so it gets deeper. Do you see how the rocks become visible and then they can dry out. So that is how God made the dry land except it was the whole world covered with ocean and the ocean sinking way down so the land could appear. Now there was dry ground where trees, grass and flowers could grow and animals could live. Can you imagine the world without any dry ground to walk on anywhere? Just ocean everywhere? But now there was land. There was air to breathe and the earth was getting to be a place where things could live.

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass and bigger plants that give seeds and fruit trees that give fruit.” Here are some seeds that are inside fruit. We all like to eat fruit but sometimes we do not eat the seeds. The seeds can be planted in the ground and they will grow some new baby trees that will grow up to be big trees. These were the first living things that God made and they are really wonderful. Only God can make living things. People

can make cars and airplanes and toys but only God can make living things. Can people make chairs? Yes they can. Can people make houses? Yes, they can. Can people make seeds? No, never, never could people do that. Can people make butterflies? No, never, never could people make butterflies. Only God can make living things.

So the earth brought forth grass and bigger plants that give seeds of a certain kind and fruit trees that give fruit which has seeds inside of a certain kind. And God saw that it was good. So the evening and the morning were the third day.

So now the ground is covered with plants but there were no animals yet. And you could not see the sun or the moon or the stars yet.

Then God said, "Let lights in the expanse of air be for separating the day from the night and let them be for signals and seasons and for days and years. And let them be for lights in the expanse of air to give light upon the earth. And that is what happened. God brought out two great lights, the greater light to be biggest during the day time and the lesser light to be biggest during the night time. He brought out the stars also. God gave them out in the expanse of air to give light on the earth and to be biggest over the day and the night and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. So there was evening and morning—the fourth day.

God talks about a greater light and the lesser light. Do you know what we call those lights today? Have you seen the stars at night? Do you know that the stars are very important for us to tell directions? We know which way is north from looking at certain stars. We can tell each month from the moon changing from a new moon to a full moon. We can tell each year by measuring where the sun is in the sky. And, of course, the sun rises every day in the east and sets in the west every night. People used to use sun dials so they could tell what time it was in the day time. Have you seen a sun dial work? Maybe we can make one and we will see that the greater light which is the sun can help us tell time.

And God saw that it was good. So there was evening and morning the fourth day.

Isn't it wonderful how God made everything and everything He made was good. God never makes anything that is not good.

Then God said, "Let the waters be full of lots of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the open expanse of air. So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves in the waters. The ocean was full of them of each certain kind. And every bird with wings of each

certain kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas and let birds multiply on the earth.” So there was evening and morning, the fifth day.

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living creatures according to each certain kind: Cattle and creeping things and big animals of the earth after each certain kind.” And that’s what happened...

Then God said, “Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. Let them have be ruler over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps over the earth.”

So God created man after his own image, in the image of God He created him, male and female He created them. Then God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and subdue it. Be ruler over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over everything that moves on the earth...”

And God saw everything that He had made and indeed it was very good.

This completes “Creation Story for Kindergarten” for the points discussed in this book. The simplicity and the straightforward language whether read by children or adults, argues for its validity.

Jonah refers to Yahweh's "making" (*asah*) the dry land (even though day three merely records, "Let the waters be gathered together in one place and let the dry land appear.") This illustrates how God "made" the sun, moon and stars. On day four the stars, sun and moon were "made" in a similar way—not created or assembled but merely allowed to penetrate the clearing atmosphere like land emerged from water the day before. However, ordinary readers might not make that connection and might conclude that the text plainly reads that God "made" the stars on day four by which he thinks "created." Readers should not be burdened with indirect reasoning about how God made the dry land with its logical application to the stars, however compelling it may be. Hence a better translation, which does not mislead casual readers is enjoined for day four. "God brought forth, or prepared, or established, or did, or put into execution, or produced, or performed, or brought about, or put, or arranged, or provided, or set in order two great lights and the stars" on day four—take your pick.** "Made" is okay if accompanied and understood with the Jonah caveat. The verb is commonly translated over six dozen ways including those cited above.

APPENDIX G

DR. BERNARD NORTHRUP'S INTERPRETATION

Following are quotations from Dr. Northrup which are listed below for the following purpose: It should be significant that the conclusions I have presented in various papers since 1985 or so and verbally for decades before that, were arrived at completely independently from Dr. Northrup even though they sound so similar. My suspicion is that numerous people who do not publish at all but who have examined the text have also come to the same conclusions. No one has a patent on Bible interpretation. Halley's handbook has a brief explanation which has some differences but again is similar. I include Dr. Northrup's interpretation to show how independent students can come to precisely the same conclusions from a search of the Scripture without the slightest knowledge one of the other. This is important for it shows that the truth was there, available to each without derivation from a common source other than the Bible itself. It is also encouraging that I, with a careful use of prayer, lexicons, dictionaries and other tools available to any student but with zero knowledge of Hebrew, can derive the same conclusion as he, an expert in the original languages. This should encourage other students to "search the Scriptures" which is the privilege of every believer even without academic letters. I have referred to Dr. Northrup earlier within this text (see pages 54 and 73).

One major point of difference exists which needs to be mentioned. At the International Conference on Creationism (1994) where I first heard Dr. Northrup speak, he made the assertion that although God created the heavens before the first day, he did not think it was very long, not more than a week. Thus he is a young-universe creationist. I see no reason that it should be so limited. Logically, if it could be a week, it could be millions of years or more as my guess would allow. But our difference does not come from *interpretation*—only our estimates of time before the first day.

After his lecture in 1994, in the Q&A, I mentioned that for a while, I thought he was reading from my book (at that time about 50 photocopied pages) but then I decided that he and I were simply reading from the same Book, the Bible.

Dr. Northrup lends the academic credentials to this Bible interpretation of someone who has taught Hebrew and Semitic Languages for many years, something that I cannot offer. Notice the similarity of interpretation as shown from the following isolated paragraphs, taken from the Proceedings of the International Conference on Creationism 1994, (reference 5) pages 397-405. Dr. Northrup writes:

It is a firmly entrenched conclusion among Biblical interpreters that Genesis 1:14-19 teaches that the sun, moon and stars were not created until the

fourth day of creation. As a result, Biblical researchers postulate that a temporary sun produced the evening and morning of the first three solar days. God's word neither teaches nor allows that presumption.

...Most creationists do not realize that they are contradicting Genesis 1:1 by holding that earth was created before the sun. They hold that earth was created either in Genesis 1:1 or in 1:1-3, while they interpret Genesis 1:14-19 as saying that the sun and moon were created on the fourth 24 hour day of creation. This "axiom" actually produces an apparent, man made contradiction in Genesis 1 itself that should be so obvious as to render the position untenable.

...And it is crucial to note that in Genesis 1:1 onward in the chapter, earth clearly exists. Note that in verse 2 earth not only exists but already has been covered by a universal sea and shrouded in darkness. This perfectly harmonizes with the Creator's own description to Job of the earth's creation in Job 38:1-9. Earth most certainly was not created later in Genesis for its rotation on its axis before a giant, distant mass which is a single distant point, light source is required by the context. It is earth's rotation before this body in the heavens which produced the first *solar day* in verses 3-5.

...But such a position is totally inconsistent with the definition of "the firmament of the heaven," that is, "the expanse of the atmospheric heavens," where birds fly (v20) between the universal sea and the canopy. In no place in Genesis one does Moses redefine the rachi'a, the expanse of the atmospheric heavens so that it means "the vault of the stellar heavens" in verse 14, 15 and 17.

...The sun and moon, already in place in the galaxy, had been shining since their creation. The dense layer of water vapor, or most likely, ice crystal, prevented any light from reaching the surface of the earth except sufficient to distinguish day from night during the first three days.

...Apparently the phrase "...and the stars" (v16d) is the direct object of the infinitive in the phrase: "And God made two great lights; . . . the lesser light to rule the night and the stars," although most translations obscure this relationship of the phrase. As a result, it is easy to reach the additional illogical conclusion that the stars were created in the fourth day with the sun and moon.

...The Hebrew verb which is translated "set" is the progressive form of the verb, nathan. To the English reader this implies the act of moving an object and placing it in a new location. However, the verb nathan is used in contexts of appointments to rulership in quite a different way. Its use in Genesis 41:41 is very suggestive, and indeed, instructive. There Pharaoh says to Joseph, "See I do appoint you over all the land of Egypt." That meaning is exceedingly appropriate here in Genesis 1:17.

...To postulate a temporary light source to produce the solar days produces a remarkably imaginative scenario that is totally unsupported by Scripture. Such an unsupportable postulate always suggests that an error is being propounded to clear up another error.

...The assumption that the earth existed as a solitary heavenly body contradicts every mention of the "heavens and earth" in that order.

...The concept which has dominated creation thought on the days of creation is the idea that the heavens and the earth are created within the six days of creation. To suggest otherwise is considered heresy because of the statement found in most translations, "For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea,

and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day..." (Exo. 20:11, 31:17). The problem which makes this axiom very dubious is the fact that, first of all, it does directly contradict Genesis 1:1 and the implications of the following passage. In that text the creation of the earth is spoken in conjunction with the heavens as the one part of a double, direct object of the main verb. The Hebrew grammar of verse 2 very carefully singles out one of these two objects to discuss its condition. "But the earth, it was waste and desolate, and darkness was on the face of the deep..." (Genesis 1:2, my translation). Furthermore, if earth was not created in Genesis 1:1, then Genesis one never describes that event. Earth must be created in verse one, and if that is true, then the heavens are created in verse one. I therefore conclude that the Eternal created out of nothingness (bara') the heavens and the earth as the first act of creation mentioned in the chapter. This omits the detail of the creation of the angels which actually took place before the founding of the earth according to Job 38 and between the creation of the heavens and the earth according to Psalm 104.

...The thesis that earth was created within the six solar days also contradicts Exodus 20:11 and 31:17, the very texts used to prove the faulty thesis. But this statement is true only if the reader is studying the original Hebrew text. The problem is that the position is built on the presupposition of the 1611 translators which required them to insert the preposition "in" in the verse. (Note that the preposition "in" is in italics, acknowledging that fact in the Authorized Version). When the insertion of this preposition was done, that act immediately required the translators to ignore the normal use of the Hebrew 'asah' throughout the Hebrew Old Testament. In spite of the insistence of many students of English translations and some Hebrew students, the Hebrew verb bara' and 'asah' do not have the same meaning or usage.

...Both Job 38:8-9 and Psalm 104:6 plainly state, that immediately after its creation, the Creator covered the earth with the universal, preAdamic, universal flood. That flood covered the crust of the earth entirely through the first two solar days of creation.

...There (in Job 38:4-7) the Eternal Lord plainly says that the Sons of God were present and that they all rejoiced when He laid the foundations of the earth. The Psalmist goes back before that and tells of the creation of these heavenly beings. He speaks of the Lord as "...making His messengers spirits, His ministers a flame of fire." (Psalm 104:4). Note that this text, with Job 38:4-7 also reveals that the angels were created even before the earth was.

... "You covered it with the *deep* as with a piece of clothing. The waters stood above the mountains" (Psalm 104:5). "Deep" here translates a Hebrew word that almost always refers to the depths of the ocean. (Cf. Genesis 1:2)

... While Biblical evidence always must take precedence, it must never be forgotten that, properly understood, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the expanse of the atmosphere declares His handiwork. (Psalm 19:1).

Dr. Northrup's interpretation, as seen in the full text from the 1994 proceedings, does differ from mine on several points but the similarities are striking.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

We all, regardless of our world view, earnestly desire our observations to fit with our philosophy. We all make adjustments in our world view; but these come slowly when compared to the rate of data input.

Dudley Benton

Often we trust specialized experts who trust other specialized experts, all of whom have formulated their “worldview” on prevailing opinions without having had a chance to evaluate the larger picture...

Ariel Roth, in *Origins: Linking Science and Scripture*.

We all have an emotional stake in religion. Be it pro or con, our psyches will resist change in our perception of the Bible's meaning. ...Changing one's paradigm is not easy.

Gerald Schroeder

*Courage, brother, do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night,
There's a star to guide the humble,
“Trust in God and do the right.”*

*Perish policy and cunning,
Perish all that fears the light.
Whether losing, whether winning,
Trust in God and do the right.*

*Some will love thee, some will hate thee,
Some will flatter, some will slight,
Cease from man and look above thee,
Trust in God and do the right.*

**Norman MacCleod
19th century**

Self-Study Quiz

(Open book test)

If you can answer the questions, you have a fairly good grasp of this book.

1.1) The basic message of this book might be called the “biosphere theory” of Genesis 1. Name three other theories of origins which attempt to reconcile Genesis with science.

1.2) What assumptions are necessary if we limit the age of the universe to a maximum of 10,000 years?

1.3) This book does not dispute a young date for the creation of Adam and the six days of biosphere preparation. How is the approximate age for Adam and the six days of Genesis chapter one determined?

1.4) The light from distant galaxies appears to require millions, even billions of years to arrive on the earth. Attempts have been made to explain this within a biblical framework. Name as many as you can.

1.5) How does the author’s position differ from ruin/reconstruction “gap theory”?

1.6) Name the two main texts which are used to prove a young universe.

1.7) What other assumptions have contributed to the young universe view?

2.1) The Hebrew *təhōwm* is often translated “deep.” What is the meaning, using contemporary speech, of the Hebrew word *təhōwm* by overwhelming Old Testament usage?

2.2) Finish the sentence: One characteristic of a deceived person is his confidence that _____.

2.3) Name as many hazards relating to Bible interpretation as you can recall.

2.4) What is meant by a faulty paradigm? If one is misguided by a faulty paradigm, how extensively does this affect Bible interpretation?

3.1) Name five of the 74 King James translations for the Hebrew *asah* which relate specifically to the interpretation of the “origins” passages.

3.2) How can we determine if Genesis 1:1 functions as an introductory statement or summary versus an actual record of stellar creation?

3.3) The English Bible plainly says that God made a greater light, lesser light and stars on day four. Yet the author insists that God did no such thing. To rescue the author from burning at the stake (or the creationist media), what suggestions do

you have for him? Multiple choice—two answers are correct. a) Let him burn, b) abandon the Bible, c) think of “made” in the way Jonah refers to God’s “making” the “dry” (the dry land), d) use a better translation of Genesis 1:16.

3.4) The English Bible plainly says that God made the heavens, the earth and the sea in six days.. But the author insists that the heavens and the earth were made before there were any days on earth. To rescue the author from burning at the stake (or the creationist media) what suggestions do you have for him? Multiple choice—two are correct. a) Let him burn, b) abandon the Bible, c) think of “made” as Jonah used “made” referring to the land on day three which was a rearrangement and “heavens and earth” according to the definitions given by God for heavens and earth during the six day activity, d) use a better translation of Exodus 20:11.

4.1) The author attaches much significance to Job 38:9 where Yahweh Himself describes the birth of the earth. What do you recall about the significance of this passage?

4.2) How did David define “heavens” (*shamayim*) in the psalms? How did God define “heavens” in Genesis 1 on day two? How did the Israelites use the word “earth” (*eretz*) in their jubilation song after the Red Sea crossing? How does God define “earth” on day three?

4.3) How does the author interpret “brooding” (*rachaf*) at the end of verse two? Do you feel this is legitimate? Tell why or why not.

4.4) Darkness is specified in one place in Genesis 1:2 Where? Was the entire cosmos dark at that time?

5.1) Neglecting some translucence, name two non-gaseous celestial bodies which are cloud covered and have never experienced a true “first day.”

5.2) Name two celestial bodies which are exclusively covered by an ocean of water (in the form of ice). What significance does the author attach to 5.1 and 5.2?

6.1) Explain the subtraction method for determining the meaning of “tohu wabohu.” What else does “subtraction” prove?

6.2) According to the author, how does the mandatory young-universe model impinge on valid research?

7.1) Give a rough description of Dr. Humphreys’ relativistic model.

7.2) Explain the “Timothy principle.”

7.3) If you have a formulated view of your own, how does it fare according to the Timothy principle when placed adjacent to the author’s view?

If you think your view is better, please inform the author. He may have missed

something important. Your Scriptural ideas can help.

8.1) The New Testament refers to Adam and Eve as the “beginning of creation.” If this is so, how can there be a long interval of time before the first day of that creation?

8.2) Young-universe creationists claim there is much evidence indicating a recent creation. Name as much of this evidence as you can.

8.3) The author suggests answers for each of the above claims and cites one fact of astrophysics which, to him, towers above all others in favor of an old universe unless better explanations are found. What is this “towering” fact?

9.1) Can you list reasons inherent in the mandatory young-universe teaching which could propel skeptical people toward theistic evolution?

9.2) What moral responsibility do creationists have toward non-creationists?

10.1) How does error contribute to the strengthening of truth?

10.2) Describe the characteristics of a sound interpretation.

10.3) Name some items which, if established, would overthrow the biosphere model of Genesis as presented in this book.

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Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Acts 17:11

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- Genesis 1**—9, 19, 26, 36, 41, 55, 64, 79, 96, 130
Genesis 1:1—13, 14, 22, 36, 38, 43, 44, 51, 52, 53, 59, 78, 85, 88, 94, 103, 133, 137, 147, 172, 180
Genesis 1:2—9, 14, 15, 18, 22, 36, 38, 45, 53, 58, 60, 78, 87, 98, 103, 133, 147, 171, 174
Genesis 1:3-5—61, 104, 138, 171, 174
Genesis 1:6-8—63, 76, 80, 86, 105, 108
Genesis 1:7—25, 80
Genesis 1:8-10—23
Genesis 1:9-13—9, 13, 51, 65, 105, 174
Genesis 1:14-15—80, 104, 134, 138, 180
Genesis 1:16-19—22, 23, 24, 26, 34, 35, 46, 53, 66, 72, 138, 170, 174, 176, 190
Genesis 1:20-25—45, 64, 106
Genesis 1:26-31—47, 49
Genesis 2:1-4—44, 47
Genesis 2:5-6—64
Genesis 2:7—71
Genesis 3:15—115, 129
Genesis 5—19
Genesis 6:13-17—120
Genesis 7:11—157, 161
Genesis 9:13—67
Genesis 11—19
Genesis 22—39
Exodus 10:22—23, 27, 44
Exodus 15:5—34
Exodus 15:12—36, 54
Exodus 20—41, 52, 69, 71
Exodus 20:8-10—55, 56, 70
Exodus 20:11—10, 14, 22, 23, 24, 26, 34, 46, 50, 52, 54, 71, 73, 100, 109, 130, 134, 138, 140, 172
Exodus 24—33, 40
Exodus 31:17—50, 172, 180
Deuteronomy 4:2—37
Deuteronomy 12:32—37
Joshua 9—136
Judges 19-21—136
II Samuel 12:14—96
I Kings 22:19-23—129
I Kings 22:34-38—120
II Kings 9—299
II Kings 12:11—47
Ezra 3—114
Ezra 5 and 6—45
Nehemiah 8:8—6
Nehemiah 9:6—50
Esther—47
Job 1 and 2—37, 169
Job 9:8—95
Job 14:9—170
Job 26:10—103
Job 38—27, 52, 58, 73, 122, 137
Job 38:1-11—25, 45, 55, 181
Job 38:9—25, 27, 44, 59, 76, 103
Job 38:30-33—34, 60, 138
Job 41:32—34
Psalm 8—30, 36, 57
Psalm 18:11—60
Psalm 19—30, 36, 57, 67, 180
Psalm 33—123
Psalm 77:19—14
Psalm 104:3-8—34, 62, 66, 103, 162
Psalm 108:4—108
Psalm 106:9—34
Psalm 115:16—26, 53
Psalm 135:6-7—51, 53, 72, 172
Psalm 136:6—72, 95
Psalm 146:5-6—53, 72
Psalm 148:4—108
Proverbs 2:1-7—38, 136, 151
Proverbs 8:22-23—26, 60, 113

Proverbs 16:25	—31	Luke 23:45	—26
Proverbs 29:25	—14	Luke 24:16	—41
Isaiah 5:30	—59	John 1:14	—117
Isaiah 11:1-9	—131	John 8:31	—37
Isaiah 11:12	—33	John 14:6	—152
Isaiah 13:10	—69	Acts 3:21	—114
Isaiah 14:12	—120	Acts 20:27	—130
Isaiah 28	—35	Acts 27:20	—68
Isaiah 36:6	—91	Romans 1:20	—14
Isaiah 44:13	—95	Romans 2:8	—155
Isaiah 44:20	—129	Romans 8:20-22	—130
Isaiah 45:15	—14,121	Romans 16:20	—129
Isaiah 45:18	—57	I Corinthians 2:9	—90
Isaiah 50:3	—117	I Corinthians 14:33	—86
Isaiah 51:10	—34	II Corinthians 4	—62
Isaiah 53	—153	II Corinthians 11:3	—134
Isaiah 65:25	—131	II Corinthians 14:33	—86
Jeremiah 4:23-27	—58	Galatians 3:8	—115
Ezekiel 26:19	—34	Galatians 5:22	—155
Ezekiel 28	—117	Phillipians 2:15-16	—63
Ezekiel 32:7	—69	II Thessalonians 2	—37
Daniel 10:13	—73	II Timothy 3:15	—100
Jonah 1:9	—47,51,66,138	Hebrews 4:2	—115
Jonah 2:6	—34	Hebrews 11:3	—98D
Joel 2:2	—70	Hebrews 12:25	—155
Joel 2:30	—59,66	II Peter 3:6-7	—114,115,124
Zephaniah 1:15	—70,117	I John 1	—62,113
Haggai 1: 13-15	—114	I John 4	—21,34
Zechariah 8:12	—53	I John 5	—21
Matthew 1:1	—44	Revelation 7:1	—33
Matthew 5:18	—19	Revelation 8:12	—122
Matthew 7:13	—155	Revelation 11:12	—33
Matthew 11:25	—41,137	Revelation 12:12	—73
Mark 1:1	—115	Revelation 16:8	—122
Mark 10:2-9	—26,115	Revelation 21	—104
Mark 13:19	—115	Revelation 22:5	—104
Luke 1:2	—113	Revelation 22:11	—155
Luke 1:70	—114		
Luke 9:45	—40		
Luke 11:50	—114		
Luke 17:26	—64		
Luke 18:34	—41		

Index

(Entries are not exhaustive. Critical Hebrew words are transliterated.)

A

- Absalom** 129
- Adam** 19, 26, 28, 63, 68, 73, 77, 88, 97, 113
- age of the universe** 2, 20, 40, 79, 81, 87, 109, 125, 141, 148, 169, 198
- air** 23, 28, 41, 47, 50, 51, 52, 53, 65, 67, 68, 72, 77, 101, 102, 106, 122, 140, 173, 176
- angel** 59, 73, 87, 89, 110, 124
- asah** 10, 23, 34, 66, 101, 134
- asteroid** 119, 120, 121, 158
- atmosphere** 23, 36, 47, 53, 56, 64, 67, 72, 75, 86, 96, 104, 114, 122, 140
- Augustine** 131, 132
- Austin** 31, 164

B

- bara** 10, 49, 56, 71, 101, 165
- beached-whale** 136
- Behe** 130
- biosphere** 23, 39, 52, 62, 69, 77, 81, 102, 106, 118, 123, 196, 198
- black hole** 57, 95
- Brand** 31, 164
- brood** 46, 60, 76, 93, 124, 125

C

- Callisto** 75, 86, 120
- canopy** 64, 96, 105
- Carson** 42
- cepheid** 87, 116
- Chaffin** 111
- chaos** 23, 58, 86
- Coffin** 127, 164
- comet** 118, 119
- Compo** 76, 78
- Corson** 155, 197
- cosmogony** 21, 46, 61, 95, 140
- cosmology** 21, 93, 94, 96, 109, 123, 124, 128

- cosmos** 21, 71, 94, 116, 131
- creation science** 22, 79, 83, 87, 131, 148

D

- darkness** 4, 26, 29, 43, 44, 52, 58, 78
- Darwin** 18, 126, 147
- David** 5, 30, 36, 40, 57, 101, 134
- day four** 22, 26, 39, 47, 51, 56, 66, 67, 70, 80, 94, 130, 134
- day one** 26, 44, 51, 56, 67, 78, 103, 116, 134, 140, 170
- day three** 23, 44, 47, 54, 56, 66, 73, 85, 138, 173, 184
- day two** 23, 53, 56, 64, 77, 105
- deception** 21, 37, 141, 160
- delusion** 37
- Demski** 130
- devil** 21, 33, 37, 134, 153
- DeYoung** 89
- earth** 4, 11, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25, 29, 32, 34, 36, 43, 45, 49, 50, 52, 54, 58, 63, 67, 71, 74, 76, 85, 89, 97, 109, 118, 121, 131, 134, 140, 157, 170, 173, 196, 198
- Eckman** 11
- erets** 50, 54, 165
- Europa** 75, 79, 86
- evening** 19, 36, 56, 75, 98, 128, 138, 175
- ex nihilo** 50, 71, 88, 101, 124
- expanse** 23, 41, 52, 56, 64, 78, 80, 96, 102, 104, 138, 176

F

- Fields** 29, 171
- firmament** 41, 52, 64, 65, 96, 102
- first day** 23, 59, 60, 63, 65, 67, 68, 71, 73, 77, 84, 115, 154
- fluidic chaos** 23, 29, 58, 86

fossil 2, 18, 22, 84, 118, 129, 142, 147, 157, 160
fourth day 22, 45, 69, 94, 173

G

galaxy 46, 88, 93, 97, 113, 118
gamma ray 46, 87, 88
gap theory 13, 19, 57, 81, 125, 147, 148
geological column 128, 147
geology 2, 3, 13, 18, 20, 21, 80, 81, 118, 125, 127, 128, 129, 131, 140, 157, 162, 198
Gish 20
gospel 115
Grand Canyon 157, 158, 195, 198
gravitation 85, 93, 124, 168

H

Ham 2, 54, 97, 108, 109
heaven 9, 18, 26, 36, 37, 44, 46, 50, 52, 53, 71, 73, 89, 95, 113, 118, 130, 140, 196
helium 118, 122
hermeneutic 38, 70, 96
Hovind 193
Humphreys 20, 85, 93, 97, 98
Hutton 147
hydrosphere 86

I

idolatry 131
inspiration 19, 38
intelligent design 130
interpretation 2, 13, 19, 22, 29, 33, 35, 36, 39, 40, 46, 75, 78, 94, 125, 134, 167, 173, 198
isotope dating
 25, 81, 83, 122
Israel 33, 43, 45, 73, 115

J

Johnson 130
Jupiter 75, 86, 119

K

Kindell 127

L

lamp 52, 56, 104
land 18, 23, 36, 47, 50, 51, 52, 56, 57, 66, 75, 80, 86, 101, 114, 140, 174
light 20, 36, 45, 51, 56, 57, 58, 60, 62, 67, 69, 76, 85, 90, 93, 116, 131, 174
Lyell 147

M

ma'owr 106
Mars 86, 119, 121, 161
morning 19, 56, 73, 79, 98, 103, 176
Morris 2, 20, 29, 40, 79, 85, 98, 118, 147
Morton 130

N

nathan 28, 40, 47, 49, 52, 66, 67, 138, 166
Northrup 23, 73, 101, 179

O

objections 7, 83, 94, 132, 133, 148
ocean 26, 29, 30, 34, 43, 51, 52, 57, 60, 64, 87, 116, 161, 173, 174, 175, 176
Ockham's razor 111
owr 106, 165

P

paleontology 13, 127, 128, 160
paniyim 65, 106
paradigm 38, 39, 97, 108, 136
Paul 33, 34, 62, 100, 134
polonium 118, 124
popcorn 119
Precambrian 140
progressive creation 2, 3, 18, 19, 21, 35, 73, 81, 94, 111, 125, 127, 130, 196

-
- proof text** 33, 50, 56, 78
pulsar 77, 87, 88, 116
Pun 130
- Q**
- quasar** 77, 87, 88, 108, 116
- R**
- rachaf* 101
radiation 13, 88, 116
rainbow 64, 67, 138
raqiya 30, 65, 77
relativism 21, 95, 96, 107
relativity 13, 93, 98, 168
Ross 2, 128, 130
Roth 31, 127, 164, 195
- S**
- Sabbath** 50, 70
Satan 37, 87, 99, 120, 129, 131, 134
Schroeder 97, 98, 107, 195
science 2, 9, 13, 19, 30, 38, 74, 80, 81, 83, 84, 87, 93, 96, 99, 118, 125, 127, 129, 134, 141, 160
sea 23, 44, 48, 51, 53, 58, 72, 101, 105, 138, 175
season 52, 59, 67, 106, 137
second day 45, 175
Septuagint 18
Setterfield 85, 111
shamayim 28, 50, 165
six day 52, 85, 94, 108, 114, 118
social pressure 34, 35
solar day 18, 56, 103, 135
solar system 65, 71, 72, 75, 84, 120, 133
space-time continuum 30, 36, 57, 135
speed of light 13, 20, 81, 83, 84, 85, 96, 131
Spirit of God 55, 58, 60, 77, 103, 174
star 22, 36, 51, 53, 67, 73, 85, 110, 119, 142, 196
stellar
 2, 18, 19, 23, 41, 45,
 51, 53, 60, 70, 74, 83, 88, 95, 105, 113, 118, 124, 140, 170, 196
subtraction method 28, 29, 30, 41, 49, 58, 86, 134, 138
summary 25, 43, 133, 137
sun 18, 30, 36, 47, 51, 62, 66, 73, 77, 79, 87, 103, 109, 122, 140, 173, 176, 196
supernova 77, 87, 118, 119
swaddling 25, 29, 45, 74, 76
swaddling band 45, 58, 137
- T**
- tehowm** 30, 34, 165
temple 45, 114
theistic evolution 2, 13, 18, 19, 35, 73, 81, 94, 98, 111, 125, 127, 128, 131, 148, 196
third day 45, 98, 125, 176
time 13, 19, 33, 36, 41, 46, 52, 60, 73, 77, 87, 88, 94, 109, 125, 147, 174
Timothy 99, 100, 108
Titan 11, 75
tohu 28, 29, 58, 86, 134, 165, 167
translation 23, 26, 34, 48, 72, 73, 86, 100, 101, 102, 135, 136, 168, 173
turbidity 158
- U**
- undefined age** 14, 19, 25
uniformitarian 13, 122, 147, 148, 160
universe 2, 14, 19, 20, 36, 46, 62, 65, 73, 76, 83, 86, 93, 95, 100, 109, 114, 118, 122, 124, 130, 134, 140, 148, 169, 196, 198
- W**
- Wigram, G V** 196
- Y**
- Young** 130

Feedback ... (Your appraisal needed.)***If, before reading this book, you subscribed to:***

- A. Young universe theory**
- B. Theistic evolution**
- C. Gap theory—Ruin/reconstruction**
- D. Day/age theory**
- E. Progressive creation**
- F. Other (describe)**

And after reading this book you are:

- A. Unchanged**
- B. Undecided**
- C. Unimpressed**
- D. Partially convinced of undefined age**
- E. Completely convinced of undefined age**
- F. Other (describe)**

Then please do the following:

Tell us about it and tell us why! Your response can make a difference to future revisions. Also, notify other interested people who should get this message. Your friends can read chapter one on the web at

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Thank you!

COMMENTS AND ENDORSEMENTS

As an English Professor at a Christian university and a lecturer on C. S. Lewis, I often speak on worldview issues and on the differences between the modern/postmodern paradigm and the traditional paradigm of pre-Enlightenment Christian Europe. Quite often my work takes me into the fray of the creation/evolution debate, a topic which I consider key to the worldview battles going on in the media, in our schools, and in the academy. As such, I have been an avid reader of the writings of such Intelligent Design theorists as Philip E. Johnson. I have worked hard to understand Genesis 1 in a way that will hold true to the authority of scripture and the discoveries of modern science.

With that as preface, I can truly say that Gorman Gray's book has revolutionized my reading of Genesis 1 and my vision of the universe and the earth. His book is powerfully argued and in its own way quite unassailable in its logic and its interpretation of scripture. I for one am fully convinced. I have toyed myself with the gap theory and with the idea that the universe/earth was created old, but after reading Gorman's book, I feel that his explanation is the best of all and the truest to a literal, common sense reading of scripture that is sensitive to the perspective from which Genesis 1 (and related passages) is written. Indeed, after you read his book, you will no doubt have a reaction similar to my own: why didn't anyone think of this before? How simple and yet how profound: the six-day creation story details not the creation of the universe but of our biosphere.

This book answers many questions, but it also does more. It offers insight into the very process of creation and suggests how we as human beings created in the image of God can create in a manner analogous to God's six-day creation of the biosphere. Further, it suggests that the creation of our biosphere exceeds in importance (because of its relevance to salvation history) the creation of the cosmos itself. Highly recommended!

**Louis Markos Professor in English
Houston Baptist University Houston, TX July 2003**

COMMENTS AND ENDORSEMENTS

...a Christian book of exceptional merit on a subject of great importance to the church at this time, and I deeply regret that it is not better known ...Bible-believing Christians are greatly in need of fresh, biblical thinking about the opening chapters of Genesis. Gray has obviously researched and thought about these matters deeply for many years. He is a man of keen intelligence with a passionate love for God and His Word, and an excellent writer as well. This book deserves a much wider audience. Recommended

Gregory Novalis, book distributor.

The whole book is well organized and clearly written; an easy read for the layman. John Fischer, researcher.

This book is not the best book from a literary sense but contains rarely discussed perspective thus garnering a rating of "highly recommended."

The Origins Guidepost - Creation Date Book Reviews
www.OriginsGuidepost.com

This is controversial material . . . it is well written, reflects Gray's engineering background, and is very useful in addressing weaknesses in . . . creationist arguments. We recommend it . . . informative and useful.

From the journal, *Does God Exist?* South Bend, IN.

... The morphology of all glacial soils clearly correspond with the time sequence of the Genesis account as outlined in your book: *The Age of the Universe: What Are the Biblical Limits?* I now freely interpret soil profiles without being unduly influenced by the old/young earth controversy.

David A. Medin, soil scientist.

When I read your book... I said to myself, "This is what the scriptures really mean. It is simple and straightforward. We've made it too complicated."

Gary Waterman, computer consultant.

... a thought-provoking book by Gorman Gray called *The Age of the Universe: What Are The Biblical Limits?* ... will stretch Biblical and scientific thinking in new ways while staying faithful to the text. ...In light of the challenges of Astronomy

to the homeschooler, this book may provide some additional support for a Biblical creationist worldview as he or she engulfs in study of this challenging scientific subject.

See website www.davidandlaurie.com/Sdastrmy.chtml

Gorman Gray's book is the most literal treatment of Genesis one that I have read but it powerfully answers the strongest objection the secular critics can raise against divine creation of the cosmos. Leaving no retreat for evolution, Gray helps clear the path to faith.

David Corson, biblical chronologist and Near East historian. (See bibliographical reference 50.)

I shared your writing with my father, and it has helped in addressing many of the questions he had concerning origins.

My father is one that has since then confessed his belief in Christ Jesus, and I believe that your book may have been the water to the seeds that were earlier sown.

Mark Cunningham

Evolutionists claim that the geological record represents millions of years of earth history. Creationists insist that God made everything in six solar days less than 10,000 years ago. And so the two groups have been at loggerheads for years, with little prospect for resolving the controversy.

Here at last is a book which provides a meeting-ground for young-earth creationists and old-universe cosmologists. Gorman Gray's thesis is that both groups have erred, evolutionists by trying to deny the plain evidence of earth's surface shaped by catastrophe, and creationists by misreading the very first sentence of Genesis.

A universe, including a perpetually darkened earth, may have been created eons ago. Then just thousands of years ago, God's continued action prepared the earth for life. This brings a peaceful, Biblical solution to a long standing controversy.

This is a scholarly book, yet clearly written and most readable—Highly recommended.

Carol Armstrong, book reviewer

COMMENTS AND ENDORSEMENTS

Gorman Gray has done a real service for the creationist cause. His book links some of the basic observations of astronomy with careful analysis of Scripture by biblical scholars and the author, which results in the elimination of one of the nagging conundrums facing creationism . . . As a geology researcher, the book has helped me by opening a timeline to the distant past never "allowed" before that can accommodate all the processes to which the rocks testify while keeping creation of the biosphere within creation week . . . If, as I hope, the book becomes influential, it will revitalize the creation movement that has been so effective against evolution theory yet so vulnerable on such issues as the age of the universe.

Lieutenant Colonel Michael Fischer, U.S. air force reserve.

I discovered "The Age of the Universe: What Are the Biblical Limits?" as I was looking for a solution to the various issues that divide Christians into ancient-universe and young-universe groups. I think that Gorman Gray's thesis represents the best of both perspectives. As a Sunday School teacher of elementary age children, I was also impressed with the simplicity and clarity of the biosphere interpretation of creation week in his "Creation Story for Kindergarten Children." (See Appendix "F")

Joe Gaietto, computer programmer.

The fact that the seven day record of the Genesis Creation story is Earth centric rather than Universal in scope, is well presented in this excellent little book.

Allen Roy, director for Grand Canyon geological tours.

The innovative approach in this book presents some thought provoking concepts on a very important issue. A "must-read" for serious creationists . . .

Velma Brunt, accountant.

Also, please see website www.sedin.org/propeng/y_o_dbt.htm by Santiago Escuain with excerpts from Dr. G V Wigram (1877) entitled, "On the current debate about an Old Earth and a Young Earth." - A review of different positions in the light of Scripture and its implications